

secondary education programs. (6th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote)

HB 66

TENURED FACULTY (Young, R.) To establish the Undergraduate Mission Study Committee to evaluate each state university's efforts to secure participation in the undergraduate mission by the university's tenured faculty members. (2nd Hearing-Proponent)

HB 21

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (Hambley, S.) Regarding verification of community school enrollments. (3rd Hearing-All testimony)

HB 98

CAREER INFORMATION (Duffey, M., Boggs, K.) Regarding the presentation of career information to students. (3rd Hearing-All testimony)

House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs & Homeland Security (Committee Record) (Chr. Johnson, T., 466-2124), Rm. 116, 4 p.m. or after session

SB 81

FIREARMS (Terhar, L.) To waive the concealed carry license fee for active members of the armed forces and retired and honorably discharged veterans, to accept military experience with firearms as proof of competency with firearms regardless of when the applicant for a license acquired the experience, to permit a licensee to renew a concealed handgun license at any time before the expiration of the license, and to require the Attorney General to monitor the number of license fees waived and cap the total amount allowed to be waived at \$1.5 million. (1st Hearing-Sponsor & proponent)

HB 414

DAY DESIGNATION (Schaffer, T.) To designate July 16 as "National Atomic Veterans Day" in Ohio. (3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

HCR 21

HEALTHCARE (Schaffer, T.) To urge the Congress of the United States to enact the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act. (3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

HB 468

MILITARY LEAVE (Perales, R., Boyd, J.) To grant full-time state employees paid leave for the purpose of attending medical examinations and appointments provided through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. (2nd Hearing-Proponent)

Agency Calendar

Residential Construction Advisory Committee, Division of Industrial Compliance, 6606 Tussing Road, Training Room 1, Reynoldsburg, 9 a.m.

Vision Professionals Board, 77 S. High Street, Room 1948, Columbus, 9 a.m.

State Personnel Board of Review, 12th. Fl., 65 E. State St., Columbus, 10 a.m.

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, 180 E. Broad St., 11th Fl., Columbus, 1:30 p.m.

Event Planner

Rep. Kyle Koehler (R-Springfield) fundraiser, The Athletic Club, 136 E. Broad St., Columbus, 8 a.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000; Host: \$500; Chair \$350 to Citizens to Elect Kyle Koehler)

Ohio Farm Bureau Ag Day at the Capital, Sheraton Hotel, 75 E. State Street, Columbus, 9 a.m.

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association Legislative Luncheon, Renaissance Hotel, 50 N. 3rd St., Columbus, 12 p.m.

Rep. Steve Arndt (R-Port Clinton) fundraiser, Olivers, 26 N. High St., Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000; Host: \$500; Chair \$350 to Friends of Steve Arndt)

Rep. Thomas West (D-Canton) fundraiser, Jimmy V's, 912 S. High Street, Columbus, 5:30 p.m., (Sponsor \$1,000, Host \$500, Friend \$250 to Team West.

RSVP with Jenna Gravalis at 551-427-9895 or jgravalis@ohiodems.org)

Ohio Democratic Party state executive committee meeting, Ohio Democratic Party headquarters, 340 E. Fulton St., Columbus, 7 p.m.

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House Activity for Tuesday, February 27, 2018

INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

HCR 24 ■ **GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS** (Riedel, C., Holmes, G.) To urge Congress to propose the Regulation Freedom Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor

INTRODUCED

HB 530 ■ **LODGING TAX** (Hambley, S., Arndt, S.) To authorize local elected officers that have levied a hotel lodging excise tax, or a designee of such officers to simultaneously hold the position of officer or member of the board of trustees of a convention and visitors' bureau without constituting incompatible offices.
Am. 3.111

CALENDAR FOR COMING SESSION

SB 1 ■ **DRUG OFFENSES** (LaRose, F.) To increase penalties for drug trafficking violations, drug possession violations, and aggravated funding of drug trafficking when the drug involved in the offense is a fentanyl-related compound, to revise the manner of determining sentence for certain violations of the offense of permitting drug abuse, and to add lisdexamfetamine to the list of schedule II controlled substances.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 96 ■ **SEX OFFENSES** (Hughes, J.) To increase the penalty for sexual imposition when the offender previously has been convicted or pleaded guilty three or more times of any of several specified sex offenses and to repeal the corroboration requirement for a sexual imposition conviction.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 182 ■ **DEBT ADJUSTING** (Seitz, B.) Regarding debt adjusting.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 271 ■ **ACCESSIBILITY LAWS** (McColley, R., Rezabek, J.) To authorize an alleged aggrieved party to provide a notice of an alleged accessibility law violation in advance of filing a civil action and to establish the circumstances under which an alleged aggrieved party is entitled to attorney's fees in a civil action based on the violation.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 309 ■ **PARENTAL RIGHTS** (Gonzales, A., Rezabek, J.) To generally prohibit a person's blindness from being used to deny or limit custody, parenting time, visitation, adoption, or service as a guardian or foster caregiver, regarding a minor.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 371 ■ **PROPERTY TAX** (Merrin, D.) To exempt from property taxation the increased value of land subdivided for residential development until construction commences or the land is sold.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

HB 422 ■ **WATER SEWER ACQUISITIONS** (Ginter, T., Rogers, J.) To govern acquisitions of municipal water-works and sewage disposal system companies by certain larger nonmunicipal water-works or sewage disposal system companies.
Wednesday, Feb. 28

REFERRED

Community & Family Advancement:

HB 515 ■ **PARENTAL RIGHTS** (Pelanda, D.) Regarding child rehoming and nonjudicial grants of parental rights.

HB 523 ■ **ABUSE REPORTING** (Lanese, L., Perales, R.) To establish animal abuse reporting requirements, to require the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program to be notified when a person serving in the armed forces is investigated for child abuse or neglect or domestic violence, and to modify the laws regulating counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists.

Criminal Justice:

HB 520 ■ **HUMAN TRAFFICKING (Miller, A., Hughes, J.)** To increase the penalty for soliciting when the person solicited is eighteen years of age or older, to specify that the fine for soliciting in this circumstance is not more than two thousand five hundred dollars, and to specify that up to one thousand dollars of that fine may be deposited into the Victims of Human Trafficking Fund.

Education & Career Readiness:

HB 517 ■ **MONTH DESIGNATION (Schaffer, T., Leland, D.)** To designate the month of October as "Ohio Principals Month."

Energy & Natural Resources:

HB 518 ■ **SPORTING LICENSURE (Dever, J., Cera, J.)** To make changes to the laws governing hunting and fishing:

Government Accountability & Oversight:

HB 522 ■ **LIQUOR PERMITTING (Lanese, L.)** To allow an outdoor refreshment area to include F liquor permit holders.

HB 525 ■ **TAX CREDIT (Schuring, K.)** To extend eligibility for the motion picture tax credit to certain live stage theater productions, to increase the maximum amount of credits that may be awarded from \$40 million to \$100 million per fiscal year, and to make other revisions to the law governing administration of the credit.

State & Local Government:

HB 514 ■ **DAY DESIGNATION** (Howse, S.) To designate February 1 as "Freedom Day in Ohio."

Transportation & Public Safety:

HB 516 ■ **ROAD NAMING** (Cera, J.) To designate a portion of State Route 78 in Monroe County as the "Sgt. Herman Zerger, Jr. Highway."

HB 519 ■ **TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY** (West, T., Kick, D.) To create the Ohio Council on Transportation Technology to make recommendations regarding state policies related to autonomous technology.

HB 521 ■ **LICENSE PLATE** (Boggs, K.) To create the "Girls on the Run" license plate.

Ways & Means:

HB 513 ■ **HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION** (Brenner, A., Ginter, T.) To enhance the homestead exemption for surviving spouses of peace officers, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel killed in the line of duty.

HB 524 ■ **COLLEGE SAVINGS** (Scherer, G., Patterson, J.) To expand the income tax deduction allowed for contributions to Ohio's 529 college savings program to include contributions to 529 programs established by other states.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Ways & Means

HB 488 ■ **TAX LEVIES** (Hood, R., Becker, J.) To modify the information conveyed in election notices and ballot language for property tax levies. (**CONTINUED;** 1st Hearing-Sponsor & proponent)

The sponsors were joined by a Xenia resident who cited recent examples of ballot language in arguing that current law is not adequate in terms of presenting details of replacements and other levies to taxpayers.

"Our bill seeks to update and improve information conveyed in election notices and ballot language for all forms of property tax levies," **Rep. Ron Hood** (R-Ashville) said. "These

changes are necessary to ensure that Ohioans can more easily understand how a proposed tax levy may affect their property taxes. This bill will improve transparency at the ballot box with respect to property tax levies."

Mr. Hood said current ballot language for property tax levies is confusing.

"For example, under current law for a replacement levy, the ballot language gives the mills per each \$1 of valuation, which would amount to so many dollars and cents per \$100 of valuation. Very often, the dollar figure amounts to a fraction of a cent per \$100 of valuation," he said. "When looking at the ballot language currently, voters may ask themselves, what does valuation mean? Why is it only measured in \$100 increments when my property is worth more than that? We are seeking to simplify and explain the answers to these questions in the form of improved ballot language and election notices."

The sponsors propose that to remedy the confusion the phrase "taxable value" on ballot language and election notices be replaced with "fair market value" and the phrase "for each \$100 of taxable value" be changed to "for each \$100,000 of fair market value" so taxpayers would have a better picture of their direct impacts.

"Generally, most individuals understand how much their property is worth in terms of fair market value, rather than tax valuation," **Rep. John Becker** (R-Union Twp.) said. "By shifting the property value variable from \$100 to \$100,000 for which the property tax is weighed against, the total amount of the tax will be much closer to the actual property values of Ohioans."

Rep. Becker stressed that the goal behind the legislation isn't to "shoot down" levies, rather to provide more transparency to taxpayers. Rep. Hood added that the additional information "cuts both ways" and would also be beneficial to levy supporters.

Carolyn Blow, a self-described tax policy enthusiast, provided the panel with several examples of local property tax ballot language that she said was misleading and failed to present replacement and other proposed issues as actual tax increases.

"Obviously, these are all used to make people think replacements are renewals and/or would not raise taxes," she said. "I have heard or read one or more of these or like 'educational' phrases with just about every replacement levy promotion, and often there is no explanation anywhere in the ad, writing or speech that the levy would produce a tax increase."

"When the voter sees the current ballot, who or what is he to believe? Even with passage of this bill, I have no doubt that levies will often be promoted with the same false and/or misleading phrases, but at least the truth will be on the ballot," Ms. Blow added.

Rep. Doug Green (R-Mt. Orab), noting that county auditors often post more detailed information about property tax issues on their websites, asked about the position of the County Auditors' Association of Ohio. Rep. Hood he was unsure.

HB 507 **TAX CREDIT (Gonzales, A.)** To allow a refundable income tax credit for parents of stillborn children. (CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Rep. Anne Gonzales (R-Westerville) said her bill stems from a meeting she had with a constituent whose wife delivered a stillborn child.

"I learned firsthand about the unexpected cost of a stillborn child. In addition to overwhelming grief, bereaved parents also carry the financial burden associated with the death of their child, which can include the cost of an autopsy, funeral expenses, missed work time, and

counseling," she said. "This bill will give grieving parents some financial relief. In House Bill 507 the existing Ohio certificate of birth resulting in stillbirth would be used as the tax documentation for the credit."

Rep. Gonzales said that on average 900 stillbirths occur in Ohio per year, which puts the state 7th in the nation for stillbirths. Similar legislation has been passed in Arizona, Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, Minnesota, and North Dakota, she said.

Rep. Becker questioned whether the bill should be changed so the credit is non-refundable.

SB 226 **TAX LAWS (Peterson, B.)** To expressly incorporate changes in the Internal Revenue Code since February 14, 2016, into Ohio law. **(REPORTED-SUBSTITUTE (On House Calendar Wednesday, Feb. 28); 3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments, substitute & vote)**

Rep. Gary Scherer (R-Circleville) said the substitute only contains items that conform the state's tax code to the recent federal changes and drops some other proposals from the Department of Taxation that Tax Commissioner Joe Testa outlined in testimony last week. He said those items were not included at the request of the Senate.

As such, Rep. Scherer said the sub bill (**Comparison Document**) includes provisions to:

- Change dates given the original bill was introduced as a companion to House legislation on previous federal law changes.

- Clarify the definition of "dependent" in light of the federal law's elimination of certain deductions.

- Update language regarding contributions to and allowable expenditures from college savings plans, which were expanded in the federal bill to cover K-12 costs.

- Add an emergency clause so the changes would be in place for the current tax filing year.

The committee reported the bill with all but **Rep. Janine Boyd** (D-Cleveland Hts.) in favor.

She said in an interview that while she understood the logistical reasoning behind the measure, she was concerned about replicating federal law changes that impact local revenue. Ms. Boyd pointed to written testimony submitted by Policy Matters Ohio that raised concerns with the college savings, or 529 plan, language, saying that continued tax shifts were negatively impacting local school funding.

PMO's Victoria Jackson urged the committee in her testimony to not mirror the college savings plan changes, arguing that they primarily benefit the wealthy. "The tax deduction for 529 plans is already estimated to cost the state about \$22 million in the year beginning July 1. If Ohio aligns its 529 plan with the new federal law, state revenue that funds public education would likely decrease," she stated.

Greg Saul of the Ohio Society of CPAs, submitted written testimony in support of the measure, saying the group has advocated for tax simplicity for many years.

"The positive impact of SB22 will be felt by taxpayers throughout our great state in terms of simplifying the tax code and minimizing compliance costs," he wrote.

SB 226 **TAX HOLIDAY (Bacon, K.)** To provide for a permanent three-day sales tax "holiday" each August during which sales of clothing and school supplies are exempt from sales and use tax. **(CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)**

Sen. Kevin Bacon (R-Minerva Park) said his bill would make permanent the pre-school year tax holiday that's been in effect due to temporary legislation for the last few years. He acknowledged that future General Assemblies may want to change some details, but that the bill would provide for a permanent template so the holiday would not have to be enacted regularly.

"Senate Bill 226, if passed, will create a permanent sales and use tax exemption on certain back-to-school items during the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday of August of each year. The intention of the sales tax holiday is to provide families with a tax break on back-to-school shopping while also stimulating economic activity for businesses," Sen. Bacon said, adding that the measure cleared the Senate unanimously.

"The tax exemption will apply to items of clothing costing \$75 or less per item. It will also apply to school and instructional material costing \$20 or less per item. There is no limit to the number of items that a consumer may purchase tax free."

Responding to a question from Rep. Scherer, the sponsor said the bill mirrors current language providing for the holiday through 2018.

Rep. Dan Ramos (D-Lorain) asked the sponsor if any studies had been done regarding the holidays' impacts to low-tax counties such as his versus high-tax counties like neighboring Cuyahoga County.

Sen. Bacon said there had not been, pointing to the "costly endeavor" faced by the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants when having the University of Cincinnati conduct a statewide impact study. He said he was willing to discuss potential research with ODT, and that there may be data available currently that could answer related questions.

Subscribers Note: Full testimony is available on the [committee's website](#) under Feb. 27.

Finance

HB 378 **BROADBAND GRANTS (Smith, R., Cera, J.)** To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.
(CONTINUED-AMENDED; 5th Hearing-All testimony-Possible substitute)

The committee accepted a substitute version that **Rep. Scott Ryan** (R-Newark) said permits companies providing satellite internet services to apply for the grants.

It also creates a mechanism for challenging grant awards and requires applicants to have experience and capabilities for connecting broadband as well as a business plan.

(Comparison Document)

Tony Seegers, director of state policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau, said today's agriculture technology requires high-speed internet access.

"From information on crop yields, application rates, soil moisture levels, plant and animal health, crop maturity, weather conditions, insect damage and weed control, this wealth of data is collected in real time and transmitted via broadband networks to the cloud and then onto desktop computers or hand-held mobile devices being used in the field," he said.

Farmers can also use web-based programs for conservation, he said. Such programs can help owners understand soil types and characteristics of their farms.

High-speed internet access further impacts livestock farmers, Mr. Seegers said, adding that some dairies employ high-tech robotic milking systems.

"Broadband is necessary not just for a better run farm, but for improving our rural communities and continuing the farm for years in the future," he said.

"Retiring farmers want to leave their legacy and land to the next generation. For many, it can be difficult to interest the next generation to return to the farm and continue on the family tradition. A quality school system will be a major determining factor for where the family puts down roots," Mr. Seegers continued.

"Children in rural areas that do not have access to high speed internet will face a disadvantage to their contemporaries. The lack of broadband may mean that farmer's next generation will decide not to return to the farm but to find a community with more accommodations that will give their children the tools necessary to compete."

Rep. John Patterson (D-Jefferson) said broadband could also impact the health of agricultural workers who may be bogged down with daily responsibilities of running farms and therefore don't seek health care regularly.

Mr. Seegers said telemedicine would provide options for farmers who can't always take the time away from work to travel into major towns.

He told Rep. Gary Scherer (R-Circleville) and Rep. Mark Romanchuk (R-Mansfield) that he's not aware of how well satellite internet works for farmers, but data can be used up quickly.

He added that he's supportive of co-ops that work to bring broadband to certain areas of the state.

Rep. Mike O'Brien (D-Warren) said he's witnesses technology at work on dairy farms and asked about how having access to high-speed internet could help farmers increase their profit margins. Mr. Seegers said having the ability to use programs that determine how much pesticide or nutrients to place in certain areas of fields, for instance, could save farmers time and money.

HB 508 OHIO CORPS (Ryan, S., Reineke, B.) To establish the OhioCorps Pilot Project and to make an appropriation. (**CONTINUED (See separate story)**; 2nd Hearing-Proponent)

HB 529 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (Ryan, S.) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020. (**CONTINUED (See separate story)**; 1st Hearing-Sponsor-Pending referral)

Criminal Justice

HB 391 ECONOMIC LOSSES (Merrin, D.) To include the cost of accounting done to determine the extent of economic loss as a type of economic loss for which restitution may be granted. (**CONTINUED-SUBSTITUTE (No testimony)**; 4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & substitute)

A substitute version of the measure offered by Rep. Jeff Rezabek (R-Clayton) was accepted to include in the definition of "economic loss" any auditing costs incurred, he said.

The new bill also limits the amount of restitution to be granted for accounting or auditing costs to be reasonable and not exceed the value of the property stolen or damaged.

Rep. George Lang (R-West Chester Twp.) questioned the definition of "reasonable."

Chairman **Rep. Nathan Manning** (R-N. Ridgeville) said the term is well-defined by case law.

HB 457 **DRUG TREATMENT (Antani, N.)** To require that an offender serving a community control sanction or a parolee who fails a drug test for heroin, fentanyl, or carfentanil be held in jail or admitted to a residential treatment program for up to 30 days. (CONTINUED; 2nd Hearing-Proponent)

Linda Chambers - whose son's story inspired the bill - told the panel that the measure has the potential to save lives.

He son, Scottie, failed a drug test while on probation and died from an overdose four hours later.

"This was a shock to myself and my family how he could test positive and there would be no consequence with being on probation," she said. "We were unaware that he had a relapse and a violation would have made us aware of his use. We will never know if this system had worked as intended if this would have been the time that saved his life and he lived 50 more years."

Ms. Chambers said she believes jail would have been the safest place for her son after his positive drug test.

"As a citizen, I am outraged that any person on probation or parole can test positive for heroin, fentanyl, or carfentanil and be allowed to leave with no accountability or recourse. With this law we take the discretion away from probation and parole officers for these drugs that are killing so many citizens," she said.

"We currently do not have enough residential treatment facilities to accommodate the need that exists in Ohio. Because of this, those struggling with substance abuse who test positive for heroin, fentanyl, or carfentanil need to have somewhere to go in the meantime, and going to jail would keep them safe."

Subscribers Note: For full testimony see the [committee's website](#) under Feb. 27.

State & Local Government

HB 454 **CEMETERY LOTS (Patterson, J., Arndt, S.)** To require a township to compensate the owner of certain unused cemetery lots and rights which the township reenters after lack of response from the owner. (REPORTED (No testimony); 5th Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

HB 483 **WEEK DESIGNATION (Patterson, J.)** To designate the second week of October as "Ohio Covered Bridge Week." (CONTINUED; 2nd Hearing-All testimony)

David Simmons, president of the Ohio Historic Bridge Association, said Ohio has the second highest number of covered bridges in the country, with 142 presenting opportunities to attract tourism.

"Over the years, covered bridges have been a huge stimulus to local economies," Mr. Simmons said. This legislation recognizes the importance of preserving covered bridges in the state, he added.

Stephanie Siegel, executive director of the Ashtabula County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, said in written testimony the major tourist attractions of northeast Ohio are Lake

Erie, its wineries and covered bridges, according to a 2017 study commissioned by the bureau.

Covered bridges were an attraction for respondents of all ages, Ms. Siegel said.

"Designating the second week in October as Ohio's Covered Bridge week will allow the entire state to engage and help draw attention to attractions that cannot easily be found while passing through on an interstate," she said.

HB 484 **HEALTH DISTRICTS (Brenner, A.)** To authorize city and general health districts to use credit cards in accordance with prescribed requirements. (CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Rep. Andy Brenner (R-Powell) said his bill allows health districts the same opportunity to acquire credit cards as the law allows political subdivisions.

The bill permits the use of credit cards by city and general health districts for work related expenses like purchasing office supplies and repairing or replacing damaged equipment, the sponsor said.

Debt incurred by the credit card would be paid by funds appropriated by the city or general health district, he added. If a credit card is intentionally misused, the district officer or employee would face a penalty ranging from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree penalty.

The representative explained that in January, in Delaware General Health District a refrigerator which held vaccines worth \$30,000 broke down. Though the vaccines were saved and the Delaware County auditor was able to provide a check for the repairs, the inability of the district itself to pay for the repairs on a personal credit card was brought to light, he said.

Rep. Brenner said an amendment will be added at the request of **Rep. Rick Carfagna** (R-Genoa Twp.) that would allow a current county health department to identify itself as a health district, health department, department of health, or a name that includes the term "public health," to establish uniform standards for labeling a health district.

Rep. Janine Boyd (D-Cleveland Hts.) asked why this bill is being proposed at the state level. Rep. Brenner replied that a health district could include both a county and a township, so it is more efficient to handle the change at the state level.

HB 492 **STATE PROCUREMENT (Gonzales, A.)** To establish the women-owned business enterprise program requiring state agencies to establish women-owned business procurement goals. (CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Rep. Anne Gonzales (R-Westerville) said her bill will create the women-owned business enterprise program requiring state agencies to establish women-owned business procurement goals.

Rep. Gonzales said it was recently brought to her attention that Ohio does not have an enterprise program of this kind. The enterprise program for women-owned businesses would operate like the current EDGE, or Economic Diversity, Growth, and Equity, certification program, she said.

This legislation will also protect business and personal financial information submitted by enterprise applicants and permits the director of DAS to enter into reciprocal agreements

with other states with substantially similar women-owned business enterprise programs or business assistance programs, she added.

She told **Rep. Glenn Holmes** (D-McDonald) that in order for an Ohio-based women-owned business to qualify for procurement of government contracts in other states, it must be certified in Ohio, which is not currently possible because no program has been established.

Rep. Rick Perales (R-Beavercreek) asked if the same problem applies to the procurement of federal contracts. Rep. Gonzales said there is a set-aside program for women-owned business enterprises for federal contracts.

HB 493 **MINORITY ENTERPRISES (Gonzales, A.)** To authorize the Director of Administrative Services to enter into reciprocal agreements with other states with respect to the certification of minority business enterprises and EDGE business enterprises. **(CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)**

Rep. Gonzales said her bill authorizes the Director of Administrative Services to enter into reciprocal agreements with other states with programs that are substantially similar to Ohio's minority business enterprises and EDGE business enterprises.

"The need for this legislation stems from some Ohio companies being shut out of other state programs because we do not have the ability to create reciprocal agreements," Rep.

Gonzales told the committee.

The sponsor said the language of this bill will most likely be combined with H.B. 492 in the future.

HB 500 **TOWNSHIP LAWS (Carfagna, R.)** To make various changes to township law. **(CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)**

Rep. Carfagna said his bill would empower Ohio's 1,380 townships by authorizing them to act on many items without seeking express permission from the Ohio General Assembly.

Many of the bill's provisions are also legislative priorities for the Ohio Township Association, the sponsor said. It authorizes townships to act on certain zoning issues, create levies for permanent improvements and infrastructure, allow a political subdivision to file an issue on a ballot and to approve a road name change within the township, among others.

Rep. Steve Hambley (R-Brunswick) said he is concerned about eliminating the requirement for zoning approvals to go through regional or county planning commissions. Rep. Carfagna said he would discuss this issue with OTA and provide further information to the committee.

Rep. Holmes asked if the sponsor had met with county engineers and commissioners statewide. Rep. Carfagna replied that he had not but expects more dialogue in the future.

The sponsor told Rep. Holmes the language of the levy provision is broad intentionally.

Rep. Michael O'Brien (D-Warren) asked why it was necessary to include a provision that requires a board of trustees to elect a chairperson at the first meeting of each calendar year when this already happens.

Rep. Carfagna replied that this process is a courtesy but is not formally codified.

Rep. James Hoops (R-Napoleon) inquired about the provision permitting a township to require an admissions fee to a community event. The sponsor replied that this requirement excludes events at schools, parks, county fairs or events held by non-profits. Cities already have this authority, he added.

HR 299 **DRUG USE (Young, R., Ginter, T.)** To recognize the efforts and successes of the faith-based community in supporting and assisting individuals who are suffering from opioid and other drug abuse and addiction. (**REPORTED (No testimony)**; 3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

Subscribers Note: Full testimonies are available on the committee [website](#) under Feb. 27.
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor

HB 211 **HOME INSPECTORS (Hughes, J.)** To require the licensure of home inspectors and to create the Ohio Home Inspector Board to regulate the licensure and performance of home inspectors. (**REPORTED**; 5th Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

Robert Fletcher, CEO of the Ohio Association of REALTORS, testified in support. He said his organization has backed the concept for years, noting that the home inspection process is the last remaining part of real estate transactions that don't involve licensed professionals. Under the current structure, he said anyone can claim to be a home inspector, which could leave homebuyers using people who aren't trained to provide a quality service. He said the key reason to support the bill is that home inspections continue to be an important component of the home buying process and that Ohio's current system doesn't provide sufficient consumer protection.

Good reports, he said, enhance a purchaser's awareness of a home's condition, while a poor report can lead to a buyer learning after the fact about a costly defect that needs to be remedied. The bill, he said, would minimize the likelihood of the latter situation occurring.

Mr. Fletcher deferred questions from **Rep. Steven Arndt** (R-Port Clinton) and **Rep. Dick Stein** (R-Norwalk) to later witnesses who work in the industry.

Blaine Swan of the American Society of Home Inspectors testified in support on behalf of all of the group's Ohio chapters. He said the bill establishes reasonable, but not burdensome, standards that will ensure quality work in Ohio.

The bill, he said, includes protections for consumers, enhances professionalism and helps homebuyers with the purchase process.

Mr. Swan noted that the association started as an interested party, and now supports the bill. Rep. Stein asked if inspectors regularly receive copies of the sellers' property disclosure forms.

Mr. Swan said there is no standard practice for disclosure forms, saying that some inspectors request them while others, himself included, only trust what they see during inspections. Home inspector BK Thompson added that he regularly requests property disclosure forms, which he said are a public record.

Rep. Arndt questioned whether a person who is brought in to inspect a single area of a home - such as a foundation or a roof - would have to be licensed as a home inspector.

Mr. Thompson said inspectors are generalists who check on 400 different areas during an inspection, adding that a roofer wouldn't have the knowledge needed to verify operations of other systems.

Dave Hoeffel, also Ohio American Society of Home Inspectors, said the bill only impacts people who enter into contracts for a home inspection for a review of an entire residential building.

James Nemastil of Nemastil Home Inspections testified in opposition, saying the bill is unnecessary given the relatively few complaints that are filed against home inspectors in Ohio.

He argued that relying on the government to certify inspectors isn't the right direction to go, saying that other states following a similar path have seen more people licensed and the quality of inspections decline. Mr. Nemastil said the rank and file members of the industry don't want the change to take place.

Mr. Nemastil said the market addresses situations involving inspectors who don't do a good job.

Rep. Ron Hood (R-Ashland) questioned whether the existence of licensure could lower the public's interest in making sure they are seeking out the best person for their inspections.

Joseph Jefferys of the HomeSpection Training Institute also opposed the bill, saying real estate agents shouldn't be involved in a bill that deals with home inspectors.

He said home inspector schools such as his are already registered by the State Board of Career Colleges and Schools, which he said should be involved with training requirements.

Mr. Jefferys also raised concerns that having lists of home inspectors distributed by real estate agents could be a conflict of interest. In such a case, he said real estate agents should be responsible if an inspector makes a mistake.

The bill was approved on a 12-2 vote, with Rep. Hood and **Rep. Bill Dean** (R-Xenia) in opposition.

HB 263 **OUTDOOR DINING AREAS (Lanese, L.)** To generally allow an owner, keeper, or harbinger of a dog to take the dog in an outdoor dining area of a retail food establishment or food service operation. (**REPORTED**; 6th Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

Written proponent testimony was submitted by Brandon Ogden of Small Business Consultants of Ohio. The bill was approved on a 10-4 vote, with Reps. Kelly, Brinkman, Lipps and Reece in opposition.

HB 433 **VETERINARY EDUCATION (Kelly, B., Brinkman, T.)** To allow a licensed veterinarian to receive up to two continuing education credits per biennium for performing free spaying and neutering services. (**CONTINUED**; 2nd Hearing-Proponent)

Lori Carlson, executive director of the Licking County Humane Society, testified in support. She said the bill would provide continuing education credits for veterinarians who offer free spaying and neutering services which are in high demand at animal shelters across the state. She said her organization doesn't have a veterinarian on staff, and while many doctors offer generous discounts for those services, the agency still spends a significant amount for those services.

She said many humane societies across the state have smaller budgets and struggle even more to pay for the service.

Granting the continuing education credit, she said, could encourage more veterinarians to donate services that the societies need.

Melanie deHaan of Shelter Outreach Services of Ohio also backed the bill, saying there is a significant need for low-cost spay and neutering services. She said estimates show that Franklin County alone has a population of 500,000 free running feral cats, adding that the bill could help limit the growth in that population.

Supportive testimony was also presented by Beth Sheehan of Coalition of Grassroots Dog and Cat Advocacy Groups; Vicki Deisner of Animal Welfare Institute; Sharon Harvey of the Cleveland Animal Protective League; Grace Vitale of National Animal Shelter Volunteers; attorney DanaMarie Pannella; Irene Fiala; Jason Cooke; Lee Schrader of the Fayette Regional Humane Society; Barbara Hodges of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association and Kellie DeFrischia of the Columbus Dog Connection.

HB 504 **INTERIOR DESIGNERS (Pelanda, D.)** Regarding interior designers.
(CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Rep. Dorothy Pelanda (R-Marysville) said her proposal would establish a permissive certification process for interior designers who provide services to the commercial sector. She said the measure allows Ohio professionals to pursue business opportunities while offering new levels of protection to the public.

Current interior designers, she said, are suffering due to an overly broad state law that prevents them from practicing to their fullest capacity.

The current structure, Rep. Pelanda said, puts Ohio businesses at a disadvantage and encourages graduates to leave the state for other locations. She also said the bill could help create more competition for design services, which should lower prices for consumers.

The sponsor said the bill doesn't require designers to be certified and won't put anyone in the industry out of business. She noted that the measure doesn't impact residential interior designers and uses an existing licensing structure.

Subscribers Note: Full testimony is available on the [committee's website](#) under February 27.

Education & Career Readiness

HB 318 **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS (Patterson, J., LaTourette, S.)** To define the necessary qualifications and responsibilities of school resource officers. (REPORTED-SUBSTITUTE; 3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible substitute & vote)

The committee accepted a substitute that includes provisions to: narrow the definition of a school resource officer; require all SROs to receive training in the first year of being hired; and specify that school district has final decision-making regarding school discipline.

(Comparison Document)

Tony Baker, the Ohio state director for Sandy Hook Promise, applauded the updates. "These improvements will help close school-to-prison pipelines and avoid zero-tolerance type enforcement," he said.

Rep. Tavia Galonski (D-Akron) asked about the benefits of the training programs Sandy Hook Promise provides. Mr. Baker said students are encouraged to say something when they feel safety may be threatened.

Erin Davies with the Juvenile Justice Coalition said the legislation "provides necessary clarification on the role of SROs in school districts."

The group welcomed a provision that allows for student input on the memorandum of understanding between the school and the school resource officer detailing what services they'd be expected to provide.

"This input from youth on the role of SROs in their school is critically important to ensure that youth - who are most likely to come into contact with SROs - understand and have a say in the role of these officers in their school," Ms. Davies said.

However, students have voiced a need for additional support services, including increased access to social workers and mental health professionals, which could reduce the need for law enforcement intervention, she said.

The Ohio School Counselor Association and Wellington Exempted Village School District Board of Education also provided written testimony in support of the measure.

HB 360 **BULLYING (Greenspan, D.)** To enact the "Ohio Anti-Bullying and Hazing Act" with regard to school discipline and bullying and hazing policies at public schools and public colleges. **(REPORTED-SUBSTITUTE (No testimony); 4th Hearing-Possible substitute)**

Sponsoring **Rep. Dave Greenspan** (R-Westlake) said the wide-ranging substitute bill addresses interested party concerns by requiring schools to allow victims of harassment to make up missed school work and reorganizes the tiers of discipline correlated to bullying offenses. **(Comparison Document)**

HB 428 **STUDENT EXPRESSION (Ginter, T., LaTourette, S.)** Regarding student religious expression and to entitle the act the "Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act of 2018." **(CONTINUED; 3rd Hearing-Opponent)**

The legislation is unnecessary because the First Amendment already protects students' ability to pray and express religious viewpoints, said Gary Daniels, chief lobbyist for the ACLU of Ohio. It is also problematic, he said, because specifically calling out religious expression "ultimately gives religious speech more protection than secular speech."

Mr. Daniels said the bill could prohibit teachers from giving lower grades to students who debate assignments because of their religious beliefs and allow students to proselytize to students through the school public address system because religious speech must be treated in the same manner as secular speech.

"Examples like there will cause a variety of problems for public schools as, under HB428, they are apparently required to accommodate these efforts, even if it means commandeering of school property and resources to promote prayers and other religious speech," he said. Similar proposals have been ruled unconstitutional by federal courts, he said.

"Indeed, protecting religious liberties in our schools is a laudable goal. However, there is no evidence of any widespread or notable problems of this type in Ohio," Mr. Daniels said. "In the ACLU of Ohio's experience, when problems do arise in schools, they are anomalies and we treat them as such."

Rep. Dan Ramos (D-Lorain) said he has similar concerns about the bill and imagines ACLU would be aware of a problem if one existed. The witness said the ACLU defends individual

liberties and has seen "several incidents of this type" in the last 20 years, few of which have gone to court because they were resolved.

Mr. Daniels told **Rep. Teresa Fedor** (D-Toledo) that he doesn't know how many religions exist, but the protection of all faiths is required to be the same regardless of how many individuals subscribe to a particular religion.

Responding to a question from **Rep. Kyle Koehler** (R-Springfield), the witness said there are different types of forums for speech protected under the First Amendment. A school often creates a limited-public forum, but that couldn't happen under the bill.

HB 491 **EDUCATION LICENSE (Edwards, J.)** To require the State Board of Education to issue a substitute license to specified pupil services personnel. (CONTINUED; 2nd Hearing-All testimony)

Sally Demmler, director of intervention and support services for the Hamilton County Educational Service Center, said the bill would allow schools to address critical needs linked to the shortage of individuals licensed to fill service-related jobs in schools.

"Often, there is a properly credentialed individual who may be retired or working in a private setting who has the professional license but does not have the ODE license," she said.

"Many of these individuals have expressed a desire to work as a short-term or long-term substitute in a school setting, but decline employment offers because of the additional ODE licensure requirement. They also have no desire or intention to work permanently in the schools."

The bill would allow such individuals to take on jobs in a handful of areas, including speech-language pathology, audiology and physical therapy.

Language guards against schools using substitute instead of full-time employees by specifying that related service personnel with a substitute license cannot be employed without satisfying additional licensure requirements, Ms. Demmler said.

Craig Burford, executive director of the Ohio Educational Service Center Association, also supported the measure.

"Ohio continues to face a significant shortage of related services personnel in school districts across the state; this is true in both permanent and substitute positions," he said. "HB491 helps to address this critical need by providing more flexibility to properly credentialed individuals who have the professional but not ODE-issued license and would like to serve as short- or long-term substitutes in a school setting."

HB 502 **YOUTH SUICIDE (Anielski, M.)** With regard to educator inservice training on youth suicide awareness and prevention in public schools. (CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Rep. Marlene Anielski (R-Walton Hills) is proposing that continued education on suicide awareness and prevention training be completed every year instead of every five years as is current practice.

The measure modifies a 2013 law that requires each school district board to incorporate youth suicide awareness and prevention training into the existing in-service training requirements for employees.

The update is necessary, she said, because the number of suicides are increasing each year.

"Current trends indicate that all ages suicides have increased from 1,420 in 2010 and in 2017 the number of suicides were 1,650," she said. "The Ohio figures are higher than the national average. Plus, these numbers are understated because of the stigma. Therefore, as a state, we are losing every single day, 365 days a year, nearly five people that die by suicide or one person dies every five hours."

The bill doesn't add additional hours to pre-existing in-service training requirements, Rep. Anielski noted.

Rep. Fedor said anyone who is licensed in Ohio receives human trafficking training and she'd like to work with the sponsor to get suicide information to more individuals outside of schools.

It's her goal that school boards also think outside of training teachers by including all district employees, Rep. Anielski said.

Bullying is an aspect of suicide, but there are many factors that influence it, she added.

Rep. Kyle Koehler (R-Springfield) asked how someone would be trained to talk to youth about suicide.

The sponsor said training materials explain how different age appropriate information can be provided.

HB 503 YOUTH SUICIDE (Anielski, M.) With regard to educator inservice training on youth suicide awareness and prevention in private schools.

(CONTINUED; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

The legislation extends current in-service training requirements regarding suicide prevention and awareness training for public school employees to non-public and private school students.

Her testimony on the bill, which detailed the increasing suicide rate, was nearly identical to that which she provided for House Bill 502.

Rep. John Patterson (D-Jefferson) asked about the intent behind having two separate bills addressing changes to the same law. The sponsor said the private schools might not be as flexible to do the training, but if both can draw support they could be merged later.

Government Accountability & Oversight

HJR 4 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (Schuring, K.) Proposing to enact Section 2t of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to allow the General Assembly to provide by law for the issuance of bonds to pay unemployment compensation benefits when the fund created for that purpose is or will be depleted or to repay outstanding advances made by the federal government to the unemployment compensation program. (CONTINUED (No testimony); 15th Hearing-All testimony)

SB 10 PRIMARY ELECTIONS (LaRose, F.) To expand the circumstances under which a board of elections or the secretary of state is not required to hold a primary election. (CONTINUED-SUBSTITUTE; 3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible substitute)

The committee accepted a substitute version of the bill (Comparison Document) that includes a separate measure (HB 237) requiring the secretary of state to establish a database to facilitate communication between the office and county boards of elections, said Rep. Dorothy Pelanda (R-Marysville).

"The language allows for efficient resource utilization," she said. "Providing ballot language and candidate information electronically will free up resources to be used in other ways."

SB 139 **LEGAL MATERIALS** (Skindell, M., Eklund, J.) To adopt the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act. (**CONTINUED**; 1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Sponsors Sen. Michael Skindell (D-Lakewood) and Sen. John Eklund (R-Chardon) said the measure would provide a mechanism for the state's official legal material to be provided online with the same trustworthiness of print publications.

The process requires that a state publishing official authenticate electronic legal material, meaning the publisher would provide a method for the user to determine if it is unaltered. "Although online publication has facilitated public access, it has also raised a number of concerns about ensuring that the electronic material will be preserved in unaltered form and will be available permanently," Sen. Skindell said.

Legal material would have to be able to be authenticated, preserved, permanently accessible to the public and provide for back-up and recovery to ensure its integrity and continued usability.

Sen. Eklund said the bill gives flexibility for the administrators of legal documents, including the ability to go paperless. It also provides certainty and consistency for the legal system, and protects the integrity of legal materials, he said.

SB 223 **USED TIRES** (LaRose, F.) To prohibit the installation of unsafe used tires on certain motor vehicles. (**REPORTED-AMENDED**; 4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote)

The measure was unanimously reported after committee members accepted an amendment offered by Rep. Brigid Kelly (D-Cincinnati) that would delay its implementation until Jan. 1, 2019.

Rep. Kelly said the amendment would give small businesses that sell used tires time to be made aware of the changes.

HB 342 **TAX LEVIES** (Merrin, D.) To permit local tax-related proposals to appear only on general and primary election ballots and not on an August special election ballot and to modify the information conveyed in election notices and ballot language for property tax levies. (**CONTINUED-AMENDED**; 4th Hearing-All testimony)

The committee accepted an amendment described by Rep. Bill Reineke (R-Tiffin) as technical, correcting typos and other language issues.

HB 382 **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION** (Schuring, K.) To modify terms describing payments made under the Unemployment Compensation Law, to increase the amount of wages subject to unemployment compensation

premiums, to require qualifying employees to make payments to the Unemployment Compensation Insurance Fund, to allow the Director of Job and Family Services to adjust maximum weekly benefit amounts, to reduce the maximum number of benefit weeks, and to make other changes to the Unemployment Compensation Law. (CONTINUED (No testimony); 15th Hearing-All testimony)

HB 450

HEALTH BENEFITS (Antani, N.) To impose review and other requirements on existing health insurance mandated benefits and to establish requirements for the creation of new mandated benefits. (CONTINUED; 2nd Hearing-Proponent)

Keith Lake, vice president of government affairs for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, said the bill would help business by creating a system to review insurance mandates and look at the financial burden faced by employers.

Requiring reviews of existing mandates would make the state check and see if the changes were actually helpful or necessary, he said.

"Typically, once a mandate is enacted, that's the end of the story," he said. "One of the problems with this approach, however, is that a health insurance mandate locks in a standard of care that may be inappropriate in the future."

It would prevent the state from implementing a new mandate unless five other states have created a similar mandate, require any mandates to apply to public employee plans and Medicaid, and prevent new mandates if the consumer price index for medical care services is higher than that for all items, he said.

Rep. Kelly asked if other states have actuarial data about the cost of the mandates and potential savings.

"Can these mandates, while they may cost money in and of themselves, potentially be cost-saving for participants?" she said.

The cost increases can cause problems for businesses who see rate hikes and wonder if they can continue to offer health care coverage, Mr. Lake said.

Chris Ferruso, legislative director for the National Federation of Independent Business Ohio, said insurance mandates distort the market and force business owners to bear the cost of higher premiums.

State insurance mandates don't apply to self-insured plans, only to the fully-insured and individual markets, meaning the burden falls more heavily on small businesses, he said.

"This means significant gaps in coverage remain, and there exists an inherent unfairness when mandates are enacted," he said.

The Ohio Association of Health Plans, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association and the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants also submitted testimony in support.

HB 451

PUBLIC RECORDS (Retherford, W.) To exclude from the definition of public record under the Public Records Law any depiction by photograph, film, videotape, or digital, visual, or printed material of victims of crime under specified circumstances dealing with the victims' bodily privacy. (REPORTED; 4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

The committee voted unanimously to report the bill after tabling an amendment offered by **Rep. Kathleen Clyde** (D-Kent) to eliminate the first prong, which would exempt records that would constitute an objectionable intrusion of a reasonable person's expectation of bodily privacy.

Rep. Clyde said the provision was too broad. Limiting the bill to just exempting records that depict the victim of a sexual offense at the occurrence of the offense would accomplish its goal without opening up a potentially wide-ranging exemption, she said.

Concerns were raised that the provision could exempt records that are important to public discussion, such as videos of shootings by police officers, she said.

"We could be casting a wider net and preventing an important dialogue," she said.

Sponsor **Rep. Wes Retherford** (R-Hamilton) said he hoped to work with the committee to address concerns but said the first prong should be retained in the bill.

The proposed amendment was tabled 8-3 along party lines.

HB 469 ■ **TAX CREDIT (Schuring, K., Patton, T.)** To authorize a nonrefundable insurance company tax credit for contributions of capital to transformational mixed use development projects. (**CONTINUED**; 2nd Hearing-Proponent)

Kent Scarrett, executive director of the Ohio Municipal League, said the bill would incentivize the creation of transformational mixed-use developments.

"Mixed-use buildings are playing a crucial role in revitalizing municipal downtowns across the country and in some municipalities across our state," he said. "An entire workforce of young talent looks for benefits like walkability and access to local amenities when they decide where to live. For the millennial workforce, they no longer follow the jobs; the jobs come to where they are."

The tax credit created by the bill would complement the historic preservation tax credit, which helps breathe new life into existing buildings, he said.

Mr. Scarrett suggested the legislation could be expanded to include tiered funding structures for smaller municipalities who might not see developments of the same scope.

Steve Coven, vice president of development for Robert L. Stark Enterprises, a Cleveland real estate developer, said the historic preservation tax credit has helped redevelop downtowns across the state. The new credit would help cities build on that momentum by encouraging large, multi-use developments.

One specific project, the nucleus project in Cleveland, is a \$500 million mixed-use development next to Quicken Loans Arena. It consists of more than 300,000 square feet of office space, 1,000,000 square feet of retail, about 450 residential units, a hotel, and more than 1,800 parking spaces.

"We stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us, and it is our responsibility to pave the way for new construction, transformational developments, that carry our cities forward, which is what this legislation helps to accomplish," he said. "We owe it to those future generations to continue to invest in our cities and their futures, which is why I fully support this legislation."

HB 489 ■ **FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (Dever, J.)** To provide some regulatory and tax relief to state banks and credit unions, to provide for data analytics to be

conducted on publicly available information regarding banks, credit unions, and consumer finance companies, to modify when a creditor can file a claim against an estate, to require registration of mortgage loan servicers, and to require a specified notice be given to a debtor for certain debt collection.

(CONTINUED-AMENDED (See separate story): 1st Hearing-Sponsor-Possible amendments)

HB 506

DOG BREEDERS (Hill, B.) To revise the law governing high volume dog breeders. **(CONTINUED-SUBSTITUTE; 2nd Hearing-Proponent-Possible amendments)**

The committee accepted a substitute bill offered by **Rep. Ryan Smith** (R-Bidwell) that exempts hunting and field trial dogs and adjusts the fee schedule to line up with the new definition of a high-volume breeder in the bill.

HB 512

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (Reineke, B.) To establish the Department of Learning and Achievement; to abolish the Department of Higher Education, the position of the Chancellor of Higher Education, and the Ohio Board of Regents; to transfer, with exceptions, the duties regarding the administration of primary and secondary education programs and all duties regarding the administration of higher education programs to the Department of Learning and Achievement; and to prescribe certain duties regarding educator licensure, community school sponsorship, and other education programs for the State Board of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Department of Education. **(CONTINUED (See separate story): 2nd Hearing-Proponent)**

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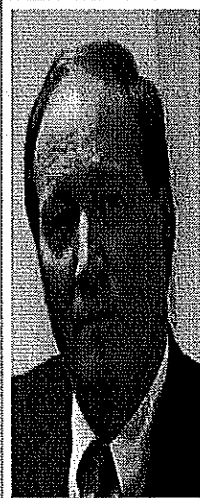
Volume #87, Report #39 -- Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Policymakers Eye Quick Schedule For Capital Bill Enactment

Hearings on the \$2.63 billion capital appropriations measure for Fiscal Years 2019-2020 kicked off in both chambers Tuesday amidst an air of inevitability.

That's because the details of the bill have already been hashed out between the caucuses and administration, and no major changes are expected during the relatively brief deliberation schedule planned for the mostly bond-backed package of facilities improvements and construction spending.

To expedite the process, identical bills (HB 529 & SB 266) were introduced Monday in both chambers. Office of Budget and Management Director Tim Keen reminded lawmakers in his testimony detailing the components that unlike operating budgets, capital bills are subject to the usual 90-day delay before they become law, so the bill needs to be signed into law by April 1 so it will be effective by the start of the next fiscal year on July 1.



OBM Dir. Keen

Mr. Keen's outline for House and Senate Finance Committees highlighted a spending proposal that's typical of recent bricks-and-mortar measures and absent any divisive policy proposals.

"The \$2.224 billion in capital appropriations supported by GRF bond funding in this bill reflects a biennial increase of \$13.7 million from total GRF-backed capital appropriations enacted in the FY 2017-2018 capital biennium," which was \$2.211 billion, he said.

"H.B. 529 is manageable and affordable within our current and future budget capacity, keeping the State well under the constitutional five percent limitation on debt service as a percent of revenue. The bill will continue to support the credit rating agencies ranking of Ohio's debt burden as 'moderate', our 'AA+' credit rating and our 'stable' credit outlook."

Recommended appropriation levels for various agencies "have been made after a careful process that has prioritized the most pressing needs of state government, K-12 schools and higher education institutions, with particular emphasis given to each project's impact on jobs and economic growth," Mr. Keen said. "Most of the proposed capital spending is focused on maintaining and improving the state's current capital assets, while much of the new construction funded in this bill is used to replace existing facilities that are no longer cost-effective to repair and maintain or no longer optimal for current program delivery needs."

Of the \$2.63 billion in proposed capital appropriations, \$2.22 billion would be supported by General Revenue Fund-backed debt obligations and the remaining \$402 million by non-GRF-backed bonds and cash funds, Mr. Keen said.

One example of the cash allotments in the bill is \$31.6 million in the Department of Natural Resources component derived from the Wildlife Fund, the OBM director explained. That funding, which includes \$6 million for the renovation and repair of dams, would support land acquisition and capital improvements at wildlife areas across the state.

The proposal also includes three Certificates of Participation issuances, or lease-purchase agreements, which are usually pursued for technology improvements.

Those are: \$29.6 million in COPs to enable the Department of Administrative Services Office of Information Technology to continue implementation of the Enterprise Data Center Solutions and Ohio Administrative Knowledge System projects; \$14 million to fund the replacement of the Department of Job and Family Services' two unemployment insurance systems into a single integrated system; and \$12 million to automate and streamline the collection and administration of taxes through the State Taxation Accounting and Revenue System by migrating the personal income tax into the system.

In addition to the new appropriations, the measure will serve as a vehicle for reappropriations, or continued spending for previously approved projects that aren't complete. In the past, those items have sometimes been the subject of separate legislation.

The \$1.26 billion in reappropriations is about 15% lower than the amount originally enacted through the last such measure (SB260, 131st General Assembly), Mr. Keen said.

"Of fundamental importance to the understanding of the reappropriations contained in H.B. 529 is that the amounts presented are not the 'actual' amounts that will be

reappropriated. Instead, the dollar values contained in the bill are reasonable-estimate placeholders developed by OBM based on its review of agency requests," he said.

The budget also contains \$150 million for "community projects" sought by regions of the state. As in previous years, Franklin, Hamilton and Cuyahoga counties are set to receive the highest amounts of project funding. (County Project Appropriation Lists)

The largest single community project is a redesign of the COSI science museum in downtown Columbus at a price tag of \$5 million.

The second largest is \$4 million for a stadium to be used by the FC Cincinnati soccer team. If the city rejects a plan for the stadium, Hamilton County will be permitted to repurpose the money for other projects, Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) said.

Other notable allocations include \$4 million for the Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Center, \$2.5 million for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, \$2.5 million to expand the Hamilton County Justice Center, and \$2.5 million to stabilize Franklin Hill in Cuyahoga County.

Mr. Keen said the budget also contains two capital-related language changes.

One allows districts to receive greater than 10% of their annual allocations within the State Capital Improvement Program in the form of loans as opposed to grants. Another authorizes the transfer of the former Montgomery Developmental Center to the Montgomery County Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board.

He told Rep. Dan Ramos (D-Lorain) that it's uncertain how much of the \$350 million set aside for public works loans and grants would be loans because of the language update.

Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) questioned how much of the public works is projected to go toward water and sewer improvements in municipalities.

Historically, about a third of the funding is allocated for such projects, but the decision of how to spend those dollars is ultimately up to the 19 district committees that work together to prioritize regional projects, Mr. Keen said. A total of \$514 million is proposed to be sent to the Public Works Commission.

Details on a competitive grant process for so-called community resiliency projects that benefit at-risk youth were sought by Rep. Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) and Rep. Nickie Antonio (D-Lakewood).

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is expected to set guidelines for the \$20 million grant program that will target children in low-capacity, high-poverty areas of the state that are seeing significant impacts of the opiate epidemic, Mr. Keen said.

"The idea is to expand...some of the support services that address this issue and perhaps can prevent some of our sons and daughters from falling into this circumstance," he said of the program backed by Gov. John Kasich.

In the Senate, a similar question was raised by Sen. Michael Skindell (D-Lakewood) - the only lawmaker to ask a question during the hearing of the Senate Finance Committee.

Mr. Keen said the governor was "very excited" about the plan. "The thought was that we would try to address this challenge in a different way, in a preventative way if you will," he said. The aim is to bolster existing facility needs for "support organizations" that target at-risk children.

The OBM director also told Sen. Skindell that the breakdown of \$21.5 million for "traditional community mental health housing and treatment options" was \$12 million for a competitive grant program for local providers, and \$9.5 million for previously identified projects that are specified in the bill.

Responding to questions from Rep. Alicia Reece (D-Cincinnati) about construction jobs and contracts for minority business enterprises that will be created as a result of the capital budget, Mr. Keen said all the contracts will be awarded per state laws.

The administration has long prioritized working with disadvantaged firms and being inclusive in the bidding processes, he said.

Rep. Mark Romanchuk (R-Mansfield) noted that Ohio has an AA+ credit rating. He asked how that compares with other states and whether steps are being taken to increase it.

The state has earned its rating - which is the second-best rating - by having a stable credit outlook, Mr. Keen said. However, he said it's unlikely that the rating will increase.

"I think AA+ is as good as it gets for us," he said, adding that states with AAA credit ratings issue very little debt, whereas Ohio issues a "fair amount of debt," and is still heavily reliant on manufacturing jobs.

The current General Assembly has been able to maintain the current rating by ensuring that debt service payments are a priority, Mr. Keen said.

Answering additional questions from the House panel, he said the bill only addresses green spaces because the state doesn't have the authority to issue bonds for brown fields and some security features are already included in the costs of new school buildings funded by the state.

Education Consolidation Plan's Backers Tout Collaboration, Communication

Administration officials and other proponents of a legislative plan to combine the state's education departments told a House panel Tuesday it would improve collaboration and better align policy with workforce needs.

The proposal (HB 512), however, drew concerns from some committee members who said it would create an unwieldy bureaucracy and hinder local flexibility.

Ryan Burgess, director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, said his office was created because education and workforce systems have traditionally been siloed and fragmented. The plan presents the next logical step in aligning the state's agencies.

Business and education leaders, along with other stakeholders in the systems, fail to collaborate and communicate, he said.

"A unified and consistent voice from the State of Ohio, instead of multiple differing voices, will empower local communities to address their talent challenges," he said. "If we believe that local collaboration will lead to a stronger workforce, we must set the example in state government."

Rep. Kathleen Clyde (D-Kent) asked how collaboration and discussion could be improved without creating a "mega-agency."

Mr. Burgess said collaboration is happening at the local level, but it isn't happening enough across the state.

Rep. Clyde said the consolidation could also create concerns that it would be harder to hold education officials accountable.

The changes could streamline the accountability process for stakeholders by making it clear who they need to communicate with, Mr. Burgess said.

Rep. Ryan Smith (R-Bidwell) asked how a restructuring would change how education is delivered at the local level.

One example would be dealing with adults who don't have a high school degree, Mr. Burgess said. The program that administers the high school equivalency exam is divided between the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Education.

Communication at the state level doesn't always disseminate out to the local level across the state, Rep. Smith said.

Chancellor John Carey of the Department of Higher Education said the intent of the legislation is simply to realign duties of the departments under one Department of Learning and Achievement.

"This legislation will foster much needed day-to-day collaboration between the primary/secondary, post-secondary and workforce arms of the State's education system, with three teams now working as one under a single chain of command," he said.

Rep. Clyde said she was concerned the state would lose focus on different interests that would be combined under one department.

When the state changed the governance of higher education in 2007, institutions of higher education became more engaged in state government, Mr. Carey said.

Rep. Clyde asked where the state sees a weakness in collaboration.

"What's a problem that's occurring in your agency that we'll solve in this bill?" she asked.

Mr. Carey said the current structure is not set up to be a united front.

"We're not connecting as well with K-12 as we might," he said. "K-12, they just want to get the students graduated. Having one person in charge of that whole continuum can hold that whole structure accountable so they can move seamlessly through that system."

Rep. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) said the merger that created the Department of Job and Family Services caused problems, in part because of the incompatibility of IT systems.

The short-term budget effect would be minimal, Mr. Carey said. There could be efficiency, however, in the long run.

Tom Gunlock, a former State Board of Education president, said the current system has "too many cooks in the kitchen" in developing education policy. By having a state board operating independently of the governor and legislature, the Department of Education often must deal with competing directives.

"I feel strongly the current governance structure is not working for Ohio's students," he said. "The current system creates conflict and chaos in budget-setting, policy-making and program administration and oversight."

Ron Iarussi, superintendent of the Mahoning County Educational Service Center, said local educational institutions are working with businesses and workforce agencies in their areas, and more collaboration at the state would help expand those successes.

"Any opportunity to establish more collaboration to help all of the entities involved in career readiness for students will help to grow our economy, retain talent in our state, and help underprivileged students find a way out of the continuous circle of poverty," he said.

Rep. Bernadine Kent (D-Columbus) asked Mr. Iarussi if he was concerned that the consolidated agency would hinder local collaboration.

Being able to go to one agency to talk about the coordination would be helpful, he said.

"I think this bill would give us an opportunity to direct what we're doing, ask questions, seek advice," he said. "To go through one agency I think would be beneficial."

It would essentially create deputy directors in the same department overseeing K-12, higher education and workforce, and those deputy directors would be on the same floor and who would have direct interaction with each other, said David Zak, president and CEO for the Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation.

"I do think you get a rationalization in that you will have a more efficient agency," he said.

OhioCorps Would Give At-Risk Students Hope, Backers Say

Supporters behind the creation of a program to pair college-age mentors with at-risk youth told lawmakers Tuesday the goal is to provide hope.

Capt. Dennis Crabtree of the Village of Waverly Police Department, whose work with students helped inspire the legislation (HB 508), said he realized a lack of hope was holding back students in his community who've been witness to their parents' drug addictions or suffered other traumas.

The handful of the at-risk students he's mentored for the last year - the same ones who met with Gov. John Kasich and Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) and ignited the spark to create OhioCorps (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 8, 2018) - are now looking forward to their futures because they know they can be successful.

"To be able to help change the path of some of these kids and to provide them hope is why I am here supporting this bill," Mr. Crabtree said.

Under the pilot OhioCorps program, students who work with mentors earn certain grades and make steps toward preparing for college will receive \$1,000 scholarships to state universities. College students who serve as mentors will receive stipends and experiential learning.

When the measure was introduced, the students who inspired the legislation met with more lawmakers and presidents of state universities. That was a real turning point, Mr. Crabtree said.

"I got to witness what hope looks like. The excitement and joy the kids had that day is why I believe this will work," he said.

In further detailing the impact the proposed legislation could have on students, Inter-University Council President Bruce Johnson pointed to Ohio State University research that shows individuals with only a high school degree are 4.5 times more likely to die from an overdose than those who have attended some college. The number jumps to 14 times higher when compared to those with bachelor's degrees, he said.

"This bill is about relationships. It's about forging relationships between students currently attending colleges and universities, at-risk youth in our communities who one day hope to attend college, and members of the local community who care about these kids and volunteer to participate in the OhioCorps program," Mr. Johnson said.

"These relationships will work to create hope, achieve success, and to ensure we don't lose an entire generation. It's about using relationships to create hope and drive success."

Students would be eligible for scholarships by demonstrating that their expected family contribution would continually equal zero dollars a year or receiving a letter from the school that indicates a student is impacted by a family opiate addiction, Mr. Johnson said.

They would also have to achieve a remediation-free test score or have a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher, complete community service training and participate in College Credit Plus.

"This may seem like a lot to ask, but part of the purpose of this program is to demonstrate to these young people the value of working hard, fulfilling obligations, and meeting a variety of responsibilities - all of which are necessary to achieve success in life," he said.

Once students receive the scholarships, there is no limit on what educational purposes they can use the money for because their tuition will likely be covered by PELL and Ohio College Opportunity Grant dollars, Mr. Johnson said.

It's likely most students who enter the program won't be aware that they have such funding options for school until they meet with their mentors.

While writing his testimony, Mr. Crabtree said he asked students whether they had anyone at home who could help them decide whether to go to college and how to fill out financial aid forms. They're hearing about those things at school, but they said their parents had no clue about them, he said.

Many at-risk students - including about half of the 1,800 students in the Waverly City School District - live with individuals who aren't their parents, Mr. Crabtree added.

"What these kids don't have is that person at home that's helping them through that process as well," he told Rep. George Lang (R-West Chester Twp.). The lawmaker had

raised concerns about whether the program will have an impact on students who don't appear to be responsive to school assistance.

Mr. Crabtree said students who've suffered trauma are keen to figure things out for themselves as opposed to asking questions of individuals in authority, so guidance counselors may not always be approached with questions about college.

At-risk students also rarely pay attention to discussions about college because they may believe they're not equipped to move on to higher education, he continued.

Responding to a question from sponsoring Rep. Scott Ryan (R-Newark), Mr. Crabtree said troubled youth don't often trust adults, but college-age mentors could better relate to them and help them make career and college decisions.

"Kids closer to their age - that's who they'll bond with," he said.

Rep. Mark Romanchuk (R-Mansfield) questioned the type of career guidance mentors would be providing to students and their parents.

"I want to make sure that career guidance piece is one that talks about in-demand jobs and we're not steering kids into fields that won't lead to a job and therefore a career," he said.

Mr. Johnson said trained mentors would be aware of the types of jobs that are most in demand as well as those that have the highest pay.

However, quality career training also involves helping students identify their passions at the moment and determine how those might be adaptable to other jobs in the future, he said.

"Education goes with training but it's not exactly the same thing," Mr. Johnson said. He added that a quality education "makes you trainable and able to analyze issues, communicate effectively, solve problems and change careers."

Rep. Alicia Reece (D-Cincinnati) applauded the bill, telling her colleagues it should be taken seriously because it's the product of positive relationships between police and the community members they serve.

"We've been asking police and community to come together and now we have something I hope that we can move forward," she said.

Rep. John Patterson (D-Jefferson) asked what more the state can do to address those who are indirectly impacted by addiction.

Mr. Crabtree said making mental health treatment easily accessible to students would make a major difference. All the students he's worked with have faced trauma, some of

which he says he has regrettably caused by having to arrest their parents for various reasons, including drug use.

Schools may have guidance counselors, he said, but they're not trained doctors or therapists who can deal with the issues keeping students from learning in class and focusing on their futures.

Citing Low Repayment Rate, Yost Backs Bill Requiring Medicaid Providers To Carry Surety Bonds

Medicaid providers identified as receiving improper payments from the state have repaid less than 10% of the money they owe, according to a report released Tuesday by State Auditor Dave Yost.

One proposal to solve that, backed by the auditor and senators, would require providers to obtain surety bonds before receiving Medicaid payments.

The legislation (SB 218) from sponsor Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering) requires Medicaid home health care and transportation services to hold a \$50,000 surety bond and independent home health aides to hold a \$10,000 bond.

It received its first hearing Tuesday in the Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee, where the proposal was amended to exempt from the bond provisions providers with a clean audit history who care for family members.

The measure is intended to hold providers accountable when they perform services without the required documentation or certification, Auditor Yost and Sen. Dave Burke (R-Marysville) said at a Statehouse news conference. Requiring any businesses that contract with Medicaid to obtain a surety bond would raise the likelihood of repayment.

"In the event of these folks that are not repaying, we can come back against the bond if we have an unpaid finding," Auditor Yost said.

The issue stems from the low rates of repayment by Medicaid providers despite audits that sometimes find millions of dollars in overpayments because of incomplete or improper documentation of services.

The report from the auditor's office cited 133 audits that identified more than \$33 million in improper payments since 2011. An analysis of 60 providers who were improperly paid found they repaid only 9.6% of the \$19.7 million they owed.

Separate data provided by the Department of Medicaid tracked the 41 cases that went to an administrative hearing since 2011. In those cases, providers have paid back more than \$748,000 out of nearly \$8.8 million owed as of November 2017.

The two largest groups of providers who face audit findings are home health care providers and medical transportation providers, who account for 13-17% of providers but 86% of improper payments, Auditor Yost said. Those providers also have among the lowest documentation and certification requirements.

"Some people look at this as just being a paperwork requirement, but it's so critical because how do we know whether or not the state should be paying for a medical service?" Mr. Yost said.

Speaking before the committee, Sen. Lehner singled out Healing Touch Health Care Ltd., a business in her district which was overpaid by \$4 million. She said 69% of personal care services tested at that facility were conducted by employees who were ineligible to provide them on the dates of service.

"Not only does this fraud rob Ohioans of their taxpayer dollars, but of the care they deserve," the sponsor said. "We need to make sure that Ohio families have access to quality Medicaid services and by weeding out the bad actors I believe we can do just that."

Sen. Lehner said the bonds would cost between 1-12% of the coverage. The newer the provider is, the higher the cost for the bond, she said.

Her plan would also require Medicaid providers to complete their certification before being paid for rendering services - a provision Mr. Yost applauded.

"The notion that we're going to let you catch up with your certifications later and we'll pay you in the meantime is a profoundly stupid idea," Mr. Yost said.

Many providers are already required to carry surety bonds by other payers, such as Medicare, said Sen. Burke, who chairs the committee reviewing the legislation. The proposal is designed not to require duplicative bonds.

People who are paid by Medicaid for providing care to a family member and don't operate a business, as long as they hold a clean record of audit findings, would not be required to carry surety bonds, Auditor Yost said.

The auditor said the state can be more proactive in identifying red flags of fraud and incomplete documentation.

One recent change Sen. Burke cited is a new Medicaid rule requiring electronic visit verification for home care providers, creating a documented trail of when services were provided.

"All we're looking for is a way to get our money back," he said.

During the committee discussion, Sen. Charleta B. Tavares (D-Columbus) questioned Sen. Lehner on how difficult it will be for independent home health aides to obtain the required bonds.

Sen. Lehner acknowledged it might be challenging, which is why the threshold is lowered to \$10,000 for those entities. "I cannot honestly answer you on whether that will be an issue," Sen. Lehner replied. "The auditor's office didn't think so."

The sponsor said she will research further whether that has been an issue - and in turn whether it has decreased the number of providers - in other states who have adopted similar legislation.

Sponsor Details Effort To Ease Regulations For Small Financial Institutions

A House proposal would ease regulations on small financial institutions while protecting consumers, its sponsor said Tuesday.

The House Government Accountability & Oversight Committee had its first hearing of the measure (HB 489) after adopting an amendment described by Rep. Bill Reineke (R-Tiffin) as clarifying how it would change the application of the financial institutions tax for small lenders.

Sponsor Rep. Jonathan Dever (R-Cincinnati) said the bill would overhaul the state's financial institutions regulatory framework and protect the industry in the event of another economic crisis.

Financial institutions that meet certain asset and ratings requirements would have longer periods between regulatory examinations, and state-chartered credit unions would no longer have to seek state approval before acquiring real estate.

The legislation includes a "second chance rule" allowing financial institutions to remedy errors by notifying consumers and regulators of the error and making reasonable restitution. Consumers would have a civil cause of action if the institution fails to comply.

"This commonsense approach allows financial institutions the ability to report mistakes such as unintentional clerical errors, without fear of retribution from state regulators, while providing an avenue for consumers to recover any losses," he said.

Rep. Tim Ginter (R-Salem) asked if the provision includes a timeframe in which the institution would have to act.

"You have 60 days to do the right thing," the sponsor said.

Other provisions would require mortgage services to register with regulators, prohibit regulators from adopting retroactive rules, and allow the General Assembly to analyze data on publicly available information connected to financial transactions, including working with third-party vendors, the sponsor said.

Anyone collecting on a debt secured by residential real estate, for which the debt is a second mortgage or junior lien, would have to notify the debtor of rights they have under state and federal law, he said.

Equity capital above 14% of assets would be exempted from the calculation of the financial institutions tax, the sponsor said.

Rep. Kathleen Clyde (D-Kent) asked if the bill includes provisions drawn from other states.

The sponsor said many of the changes come from problems noticed by Ohio banks and from conversations with national lending associations.

Rep. Dever told Rep. Brigid Kelly (D-Cincinnati) the changes to the financial institutions tax would mostly affect small institutions.

"The savings that they would get, although it's minimal to the state budget...for a really small lending institution, a few dollars here and there makes a big difference in their ability to hire, retain, make loans, etc.," the sponsor said.

Fireworks Industry Raises Concerns About Possible Change To Legalization Bill

The fireworks industry continues to back a measure to put Ohio on a path to legalize the use of consumer fireworks.

Daniel Peart, director of government affairs for Phantom Fireworks, told members of the Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee Tuesday that the current laws on consumer fireworks do not reflect the realities of their use.

Since 1991, he said, consumer use has more than doubled, while firework-related injuries have fallen by more than 60%.

"Equally as important to fireworks safety is ensuring an educated and informed consumer," he said. "Consumer fireworks retailers are spending more time and resources to educate consumers on how fireworks work, and how to use fireworks properly and safely. Our company floods our customers with safety messaging from the moment they walk through our doors until the moment they leave."

The legislation would create a study group to weigh in on the issue, which Mr. Peart called "a rational approach to ensure that we don't find ourselves in a similar situation of dealing with antiquated fireworks laws."

"A study group made up of industry, enforcement, and interested parties is a logical means to generate discussion between stakeholders," he said. "The ongoing dialogue

between industry and enforcement has proven to be effective in multiple states, and leads to a transparency that benefits all involved."

Ken Sprague, president of the Ohio State Pyrotechnics Association, said there are more than 50 licensed locations in Ohio that sell consumer fireworks. However, state law does not permit their use by the average Ohioan.

"This is a dated approach to the consumer fireworks business that should be addressed," he said. "Every state bordering Ohio already permits the sale and use of the full line of consumer fireworks."

Mr. Sprague and Mr. Peart also took issue with a proposed amendment that was not brought up for consideration to exclude "fountains" from the definition of fireworks.

"Fountains, while not an impressive aerial display, still have a fuse that needs lit, and they are still a consumer firework and should be treated as such," Mr. Peart said. "It is a dangerous precedent to consider them to be no different than a pack of chewing gum that can be displayed on the shelf of a gas station or Walmart with no supervision, nor knowledge from the staff of how the item will function once ignited."

Chairman Sen. Bill Coley (R-Liberty Twp.) questioned if Mr. Peart's company sells "fountains" in retail stores outside of Ohio.

He acknowledged it does, but called it bad policy to allow for sales of commercial fireworks in such locations.

Bruce Blom, co-founder of the OPAG, said the law should also address the storage and manufacturing of consumer fireworks. He also called for the current moratorium on licensing to end.

"The current moratorium, that has shackled this industry for 20-plus years, has caused a major impediment to free trade, competition and product development, to the detriment of consumers and other interested parties," he said.

However, Mr. Sprague, who is the president of Hamburg Fireworks Displays in Lancaster, said an immediate and wholesale end to the moratorium would put businesses like his in jeopardy.

Prosecutors, Public Defender Spar Over Protection Order Bill

Ohio's county prosecutors and the office that represents indigent defendants are again at odds over a proposed law.

The Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association is backing a measure (SB 171) to boost penalties for repeat violators of a protection order.

Executive Director Lou Tobin said Tuesday that under current law, an individual in those circumstances would be eligible for a fifth-degree felony charge.

"The penalty never goes beyond a felony of the fifth degree regardless of the number of violations," he told members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "This provides little deterrent to someone with multiple violations and does not, we believe, appropriately reflect the level of criminality or the dangerousness of an offender who continues to violate these orders."

The graduated penalties contained in the legislation will "deter violations, promote the safety of victims and promote public safety generally," Mr. Tobin added.

But Niki Clum, legislative liaison for the Office of the Ohio Public Defender, warned that, even with expected changes, it has the potential to add to the state's prison overcrowding problem.

She said it will also have an impact on the finances of local governments.

"Individuals with higher level felony offenses often receive higher bonds and, as a result, are more likely to be incarcerated pretrial," she said.

Ms. Clum also said the changes to the bill could encourage judges to sentence first-time offenders to six months in jail to ensure future offenses carry the potential of prison time.

"If Ohio is serious about reducing recidivism rates, reducing the prison population, and keeping its citizens safe, then Ohio should spend that money on services that address the underlying issues that led to the protection order," she said. "That money could be used to require these individuals to participate in anger management, substance abuse counseling, behavioral counseling, and family counseling - to give just a few examples."

The measure also fails to recognize the "complex relationships" that lead to protection orders, Ms. Clum said.

"Many individuals under a protection order have relationships with the protected party - they are married, they own property together or they have children together," she said. "For this reasons, it is not uncommon for a protected party to initiate the contact, despite a protection order, so that the two can discuss personal and familial matters. There is no penalty for a protected party who violates a protection order. However, an individual under the protection order can be sent to prison for simply responding to a text."

Sen. Bill Coley (R-Liberty Twp.) questioned Mr. Tobin about that possibility.

Mr. Tobin said judges and prosecutors have discretion in these cases, and he doubts that individuals are being sent to prison for sending a text message. He said law enforcement officials are more concerned with those served a protection order showing up at a protected individual's home or place of work.

Appeals Court Rules Ed Board Met Lawfully Before ECOT Vote

The State Board of Education didn't commit a technical violation when it voted to claw back \$60 million from The Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow, an appeals court has ruled.

The Franklin County Court of Appeals upheld the July decision of a lower court that the board didn't break open meetings laws the day it accepted a hearing officer's finding that ECOT was overpaid for the number of full-time students it served in the 2015-16 school year.

The shuttered e-school argued board members met illegally in June to come to a decision on the repayment prior to a vote.

Its attorney said at the time a violation was clear because members voted without discussion. He also criticized the meeting schedule and accused board president Tess Elshoff of polling members on their opinions prior to a vote. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, June 14, 2017)

Similarly, the board voted without discussion earlier this month to accept a hearing officer's findings from ECOT's 2016-17 school year attendance audit. Another \$19 million was deemed overpaid as a result of that review. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 12, 2018)

The three-judge appeals court found that because the board's 2017 proceedings were quasi-judicial in nature, the Open Meetings Act cannot be violated.

"By issuing a final determination after providing notice, a hearing, and the opportunity to provide evidence, BOE was acting in a quasi-judicial capacity," the court said in its decision.

ECOT is currently awaiting an Ohio Supreme Court ruling in a separate case in which it contended the attendance audit was incorrectly completed, therefore no repayments should be made. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 13, 2018)

Issue 1 Officially Titled; Slaby Backs Out Of Reelection Bid; Gavarone Opponent Left Off Ballot; Clyde Wants Funding For Voting Machines...

Secretary of State Jon Husted announced Tuesday the ballot title for Issue 1.

The congressional redistricting proposal will state that it "Creates a bipartisan, public process for drawing congressional districts."

Secretary Husted also announced that three statewide write-in candidates have qualified for the May primary ballot.

Paul Curry will run for treasurer as a member of the Green Party, as will Philena Irene Farley in the U.S. Senate race. Timothy A. Pinton will also contend in the U.S. Senate race as a member of the Republican Party.

Reelection Bid: Rep. Marilyn Slaby has decided not to seek reelection after filing for the race.

The Akron Republican's withdrawal from the race clears the way for Bill Roemer to secure the party's nomination.

Rep. Slaby is backing Mr. Roemer's candidacy, according to the House Republican Caucus.

Mr. Roemer is set to face Democrat Elliot Kolkovich in the November general election.

Gavarone Opponent: Another incumbent Republican, Rep. Theresa Gavarone (R-Bowling Green), will have an easier path to reelection after her primary opponent, John Clemons, filed the wrong forms and was not certified for the ballot, according to the Wood County Board of Elections.

She is slated to face Democrat Daniel Gordon in the general election.

Voting Machines: Rep. Kathleen Clyde (D-Kent), a candidate to replace Secretary of State Husted, lamented the lack of funding in the capital bill (SB 266 & HB 529) for voting machines.

The funding is all the more important in the wake of Russian meddling in American elections, she said.

"Ohio was one of several states targeted by a Russian government operation in the 2016 presidential election and federal officials, including Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, have said the attackers are not letting up. There is an urgent need to get Ohio prepared for ongoing, intensifying cyber threats," Rep. Clyde said.

"I would like to see funding for our counties to purchase secure voting machines in the capital budget bill. Despite bipartisan calls for such funding to be included in the bill, funds are not in the bill as introduced. I am working on an amendment to the bill to include needed funding to protect our democracy from any and all attacks and I urge bipartisan cooperation on this urgent matter."

Majority Republicans are eyeing legislation (SB 135) sponsored by her opponent in the secretary of state contest, Sen. Frank LaRose (R-Hudson) as a vehicle for the voting machine funding.

Oil, Gas Leasing Commission Schedules First Meeting; Congress Members Request Federal Support For Nuclear Plants...

The Oil and Gas Leasing Commission will meet for the first time next month, despite the fact the board was formed seven years ago.

The Department of Natural Resources announced the first public meeting of the group is scheduled for 1 p.m. March 15. Items on the agenda include training provided by the Ohio Ethics Commission, the Attorney General's office and other organizational groundwork.

The commission is charged with reviewing industry-nominated lease proposals for oil and gas drilling on state property. But the public hearing is notable because it's the first time the commission will meet since it was created in 2011 legislation (HB133; 129th General Assembly).

That delay is thanks to Gov. John Kasich, who declined to appoint members to the five-member panel until last year after lawmakers proposed budget language to wrest appointment authority away from the governor and vest it within the legislature. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, July 6, 2017)

Gov. Kasich vetoed that language, prompting a potential budget veto override. Ultimately, the administration and lawmakers reached an agreement and the governor filled out the commission's roster. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, December 20, 2017)

The meeting will take place at ODNR's Columbus office at 2045 Morse Rd., Building C.

FERC Case: Four of Ohio's members of Congress are urging the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to take "immediate action" to support nuclear power plants.

The missive was signed by U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo), U.S. Rep. Dave Joyce (R-Novelty), U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-Cleveland) and U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles).

Their letter was submitted to FERC as part of its ongoing review of grid reliability - an investigation opened after the commission declined the Trump Administration's previous grid proposal and opted to pursue its own exploration of the issue. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, January 9, 2018)

The group called nuclear energy "a key component" of the nation's energy strategy and said premature closure of plants like FirstEnergy's Davis-Besse and Perry threatens the country's competitive edge.

"Unfortunately, recent news reports reveal that Ohio's only two nuclear power plants appear headed for premature closure," the legislators wrote, "We urge you to step in and offer immediate assistance to prevent these critical generators from closing prematurely."

FERC's review is in its early stages; The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and other entities in the state have already begun filing motions to intervene in anticipation of filing future testimony.

The debate over financially supporting the FirstEnergy plants, meanwhile, continues at the state level where Statehouse proposals (SB 128, HB 178, & HB 381) to do just that await further hearings. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 22, 2018)

Plant Sale: The sale of an unused Clermont County power plant has been finalized, the plant's joint owners said Monday.

Duke Energy, AEP and Dayton Power & Light's announcement pertains to the retired Walter C. Beckjord coal-fired plant in New Richmond. The plant was sold for an undisclosed sum to Commercial Liability Partners which plans to repurpose the property for future development.

At the same time, Duke will contribute \$750,000 over a three-year period to Connect Clermont, "in order to help facilitate future economic development opportunities," the company said.

"Beckjord Station powered our region and played a vital role in the county's economy for countless families and businesses," said Jim Henning, president, Duke Energy Ohio and Kentucky. "We've pursued an outcome that will advance the county's priorities with regard to safeguarding the environment and revitalizing the property and we're pleased that this historic property is poised for a second act as an integral part of our community."

The plant, which retired in 2014, began operation in 1952 and by 1969 had been expanded for a capacity of 1,202 megawatts. Four oil-fired combustion turbines were added in the 1970s, adding 61 megawatts of capacity each.

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Gongwer News Service subscribers have full access to the leading bill tracking and alert system, which now includes the ability to receive real-time alerts and updates via text message in addition to email.

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Tracking Groups: You can use Tracking Groups to sort tracked legislation by subject matter, client, staff assignment or any other factor. To create a group, open the Tracking Groups menu on the bill tracking page and click the green Add New Tracking Group button. You will then have an opportunity to name the tracking group and add bills directly to that group.

Additional bills can be added to tracking groups at any time by clicking on the green track button, or by using the Manage Groups option in the Tracked Legislation menu.

Tracking Group Options: Once a tracking group has been created, subscribers have several options to display different content on their Status Reports. Subscribers may choose to display:

- All or a limited number of activities on bills;
- Full or partial bill titles;
- Revised Code sections impacted;
- Links to bill texts, analyses, roll call votes, fiscal notes and other key documents;
- Personal comments on legislation;
- Lists of recent bill introductions, and;
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Status Reports & Committee Schedules: To generate a status report on all bills you are tracking, select the Status Reports menu on the bill tracking page, and click View

Report. To generate a committee schedule showing all of the bills you are tracking, select the Status Reports menu on the bill tracking page, and click View Report.

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To Track Legislative Activities: Open the Legislation Activity Tracking Menu on the bill tracking page and click on the green Add/Edit Activities button. Select the activities you want to track (e.g. introduced, passed, calendar for coming session, signed by the governor) and click the Save Changes button.

Once an activity is tracked, you will receive an email and/or text whenever there is an action that matches your requests.

To Track Committees: Open the Committee Tracking Menu on the bill tracking page and select the committees you want to track (House, Senate, Joint). Or, select the Track Committee button from each committee page.

Once a committee is tracked, you will receive an email and/or text whenever that committee schedules a hearing or makes notable changes in its meeting time or agenda.

To Track Legislation Categories: Visit the legislation category page and click the green Track button next to the category you want to track.

Once a category tracked, you will receive an email and/or text whenever a new bill is introduced and filed in that category. If you want to track that bill beyond that point, select the green Track button next to the bill and save it in your Tracked Legislation menu and/or assign it to a Tracking Group.

For questions about Gongwer's bill tracking system, feel free to contact Gongwer at gongwer@gongwer-oh.com or 614.221.1992.

Governor's Appointments

Miami University Board of Trustees, student member: Megan Cremeans of Somerset for a term beginning March 1, 2018, and ending February 28, 2020.

Miami University Board of Trustees: Zachary T. Haines of Cincinnati for a term beginning March 1, 2018, and ending February 28, 2027

Columbiana County Municipal Court: Timothy J. McNicol of Wellsville, who will take office on March 7, 2018. He replaces Judge Charles C. Amato who resigned.

Supplemental Agency Calendar Wednesday, February 28

Vision Professionals Board, 77 S. High Street, Room 1948, Columbus, 9 a.m.

Thursday, March 15

Oil and Gas Leasing Commission, 1st Fl., Bldg. C, 2045 Morse Rd., Columbus, 1 p.m.

Supplemental Event Planner Thursday, March 1

Sen. Frank LaRose (R-Hudson) news conference on proposed changes to SB 135 on voting machines, Senate Harding Press Rm., Statehouse, Columbus, 9 a.m.

Women's Fund of Central Ohio legislative reception, Huntington Center, 41 S. High Street, The Casto Community Room, 10th Floor, Columbus, 5 p.m.

Monday, March 19

Sen. Sandra Williams (D-Cleveland) fundraiser, Crop Bistro & Bar, 2537 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, 5:30 p.m., (Gold: \$500, Silver: \$250, Bronze: \$100, Supporter: \$50 to Friends of Sandra Williams)

Rep. Richard Brown (D-Canal Winchester) fundraiser, Shades, 2486 S. High St., Columbus, 6 p.m., (\$500, \$250 or \$100)

Tuesday, March 20

Sen. Michael Skindell (D-Lakewood) fundraiser, Club 185, 185 E. Livingston Ave., Columbus, 5 p.m., (\$1,000, \$500 or \$350)

Rep. Kristin Boggs (D-Columbus) fundraiser, Hadley's, 260 S. 4th St., Columbus, 5:30 p.m., (\$1,000, \$500, \$250 or \$100)

Wednesday, March 21

Buckeye Institute luncheon with American Enterprise Institute President Arthur Brooks, Athletic Club Of Columbus, 136 E. Broad St., Columbus, 12 p.m., (For more information and to register visit the Institute's website at <https://www.buckeyeinstitute.org/events>)

Sen. Minority Leader Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Hts.) fundraiser, Milestone 229, 229 Civic Center Drive, Columbus, 5 p.m., (\$2,500, \$1,000 or \$500)

Tuesday, April 10

Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus fundraiser, Condado Tacos, 132 S. High St., Columbus, 5 p.m., (\$1,000, \$500 or \$350)

Rep. Riordan McClain (R-Upper Sandusky) fundraiser, The Athletic Club, 136 E. Broad St., Columbus, 5 p.m., (Host: \$1000; Sponsor: \$500; Chair: \$350 to McClain for Ohio)

Wednesday, April 11

Sen. Vernon Sykes (D-Akron) fundraiser, Capital Club, 41 S. High St., Columbus, 5 p.m., (\$1,000; \$500; \$350)

Tuesday, April 17

Rep. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) fundraiser, The Athletic Club 136 E. Broad St., Columbus, 5 p.m., (Gold: \$2,000; Silver: \$1,000; Bronze: \$500 to Seitz for Ohio)

Tuesday, April 24

OAHU Annual Day at the Statehouse, Sheraton Columbus Hotel at Capitol Square, 75 East State Street, Columbus

House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) fundraiser, Club 185, 185 E. Livingston Ave., Columbus, 5 p.m., (Chair: \$3,700; Sponsor: \$1,370 to Committee to Elect Cliff Rosenberger)

17 S. High St., Suite 630

Columbus Ohio 43215

Phone: 614-221-1992 | Fax: 614-221-7844 | Email: gongwer@gongwer-oh.com

Scott Miller, President | Kent Cahlander, Editor | Melissa Dilley, Mike Livingston, Dustin Ensinger, Jon Reed, Staff Writers

Click the  after a bill number to create a saved search and email alert for that bill.

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From: report@hannah.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2018 9:06 PM
To: DL Hannah
Subject: Hannah News Stories for Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

IN TODAY'S HANNAH REPORT:

Please click here to read the entire Hannah Report.

Today's Stories

- [Keen Presents Capital Budget Details to Lawmakers](#)
- [Husted Announces Issue 1 Ballot Title, Statewide Write-in Candidates](#)
- [Yost Touts Bill to Improve Collection of Improper Medicaid Payments](#)
- [Appeals Court Rejects ECOT's Open Meetings Lawsuit](#)
- [Tax Conformity Legislation Speeds to Passage; Concerns over 529 Provisions Raised](#)
- [Administration Officials, Former SBOE President Laud Consolidation Bill](#)
- [Legislation Aims for 'Truth in Advertising' for Local Property Tax Levies](#)
- [Yuko Praises Efforts to Clean Up ARCO Site](#)
- [State Awards \\$3.5M for Toxic Algae Research](#)
- [Portman Announces Introduction of CARA 2.0](#)
- [Supreme Court Appeal Portends Flood of Class Action Lawsuits against Public Utilities](#)
- [State Government Roundup: State Joint Information Center; ODNR](#)
- [Campaign Corner: Endorsements](#)
- [Campus Chronicle: Kent State](#)
- [Executive Actions: Appointments; Judicial Appointment](#)

House Committee Reports

- [Criminal Justice](#)
- [Economic Development, Commerce and Labor](#)
- [Education and Career Readiness](#)
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Senate Committee Reports

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- Judiciary
- Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
- Transportation, Commerce and Workforce

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From: Fedor, Teresa

Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2018 9:34 PM

To: Parette, Dominic

CC: House_All

Subject: Re: Request for Co-Sponsorship – Paid Family and Medical Leave

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 27, 2018, at 5:05 PM, Parette, Dominic <Dominic.Parette@ohiohouse.gov> wrote:

****REMINDER-DEADLINE TO CO SPONSOR IS
MARCH 9, 2018 at 4PM**

Dominic Parette
Legislative Aide to Representative Boyd
Ohio House District 09
614-644-5079

From: Parette, Dominic

Sent: Monday, February 05, 2018 5:01 PM

To: House_All <House_All@ohiohouse.gov>

Subject: Request for Co-Sponsorship – Paid Family and Medical Leave

<image001.png>

MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative Janine Boyd and Representative Kristin Boggs
DATE: February 5, 2018
RE: Request for Co-Sponsorship – Paid Family and Medical Leave

We will soon introduce legislation to create the Ohio Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. Today we chose to send this co-sponsor request as this date marks the 25th anniversary of FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act). This legislation will provide 12 weeks of family and medical leave

benefits, which will permit individuals to care for a family member, bond with a new child, or address their own serious health condition.

Out of 178 countries worldwide, the United States is one of three that does not provide paid leave to new mothers. So far five states—California, New Jersey, New York, Hawaii and Rhode Island offer some sort of paid leave to men and women who provide care. The federal Family Medical Leave Act provides 12 weeks of leave for family and medical reasons. This time is unpaid and employers with fewer than 50 employees are exempt, which eliminates a large segment of workers. Ohio should lead on the issue of paid leave to grow our economy and allow working people to put family first.

The program will be under the purview of the Department of Job and Family Services. An individual would receive leave insurance benefits for: a health condition which makes him/her unable to perform their job duties; caring for a new child during after birth, adoption, or foster care placement; caring for a child, parent, or spouse who has a serious health condition; or the individual is taking any other leave as authorized by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. In order to be eligible for program benefits, an individual must file a claim with ODJFS; must have worked at least 680 hours during the base period; premiums have been withheld and remitted for at least one year; and the leave must be for the above-mentioned purposes.

Once established, program benefits will be paid by assessing premiums on employees. Employers will be required to deduct and withhold premiums from employee's wages. However, an employer may opt to pay the contributions on behalf of employees.

An employee who is covered by an employer policy or collective bargaining agreement that provides the employee with greater leave than that provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act may elect not to participate in the Program in accordance with rules adopted by the Director. An employee who elects to opt out of participating in the Program is not liable for any premium or contribution that would otherwise be due under the Program.

Working people in Ohio should not have to worry about losing their job or falling behind financially just to take care of a sick child or relative; address their own serious health condition; or care for and bond with their newborn child. Ohio cities like Dayton and Cincinnati are leading on leave. By allowing working people to put their family first, we can truly make Ohio a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

If you have any questions or would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Dominic Paretti, at 614-644-5079 or via email at Dominic.Paretti@OhioHouse.Gov and Serena Finlay, 614-466-1896 or via email at Serena.Finlay@OhioHouse.Gov.

<image002.jpg>

Janine Boyd

State Representative, Ohio House District 09

<image003.png>

Kristin Boggs

State Representative, Ohio House District 18

From: WCRI
Sent: Thursday, March 1, 2018 10:04 AM
To: Rep76
Subject: Should we hold a seat for you?

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Workers Compensation
Research Institute

Over 400 people will be taking their seats in three weeks for our annual workers' compensation conference, March 22-23, in Boston, MA.
Should we hold a seat for you?

For those still on the fence, below are three great reasons to attend.



#1) Content: WCRI's conference is a leading workers' compensation forum that will have you talking for months about what you learned. We have put together an agenda that focuses on some of the most significant issues facing the workers' compensation system today and for years to come, delivered by thought leaders and experts from across the country. [Click here](#) to see the agenda.

#2) Networking: From public officials and labor representatives to claims administrators and risk managers, they all come to WCRI's conference to learn about the latest trends and network with other like-minded people who believe in data to make better decisions and improve the system. [Click here](#) to see a diverse list of the nearly 200 organizations attending.

#3) Continuing Education Credit: Learn from leading workers' compensation professionals while you earn continuing education credit. The conference has been approved for 7 hours of continuing education credits for Certified Disability Management Specialist (CDMS), Certified Case Manager (CCM), and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC).

Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your career, expand your knowledge, and network with your peers.

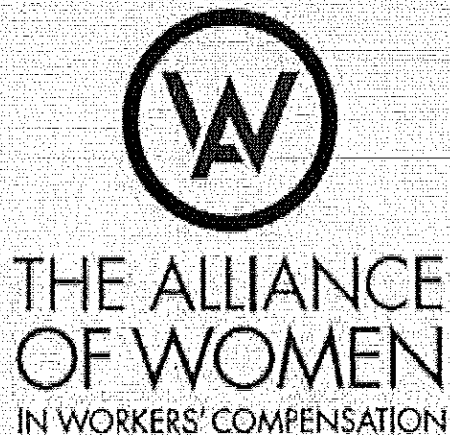
[Learn More / Register](#)

See what keeps many of our conference attendees coming back year after year.



Alliance of Women in Workers' Compensation

The Alliance is hosting a separate event the day before our conference on March 21, 2018. Although this event is not officially part of the WCRI conference, it addresses one of the most challenging topics in our industry. A panel of experts will host an interactive presentation on the stages of pain along with various treatment options for each. The session will be followed by collaborative table discussions with the goal of building consensus around alternatives to opioids for treating pain. [Click here](#) to learn more.



STAY CONNECTED WITH WCRI



Workers Compensation Research Institute (WCRI), 955 Massachusetts Avenue,
6th Floor, Cambridge , MA 02139

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Sent by wcri@wcrinet.org

From: Caitlin Johnson, Policy Matters Ohio
Sent: Thursday, March 1, 2018 11:06 AM
To: Rep76
Subject: RELEASE: Policy Matters opposes Medicaid work requirements

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PRESS RELEASE

Policy Matters opposes Medicaid work requirements

Contact: Wendy Patton
614.221.4505

Today Policy Matters Ohio joined activists, advocates and health care providers to oppose a new and dangerous barrier to health care in the state.

With encouragement from the Trump Administration, the state is applying to the federal government for a 1115 waiver to require all of the 700,000 Ohioans who receive health insurance through Medicaid expansion to hold a job or participate in some form of "community engagement activity." The state projects the new requirement will cause more than 18,000 people to lose health coverage. Senior Project Director Wendy Patton spoke at the second public hearing on the proposal. She testified that the work requirements aren't necessary, don't make sense in today's low-wage job market, put an unfair burden on patients and could be unconstitutional.

Sixty-one percent of Medicaid patients already work, she said. The rest are either students, people with disabilities, early retirees, job seekers or people caring for a loved one with a disability. Many work in low-

paying industries like retail or fast food, which offer low and inconsistent hours and little or no paid leave. Patients could easily fall short of the 80-hour-a-month work requirement.

"Tragically, those who lose hours because they are sick or caring for a sick child could lose health coverage," Patton said. "Those in temporary, intermittent or seasonal jobs are at particular risk for losing eligibility."

While the proposal allows for exemptions, it's up to enrollees to prove they qualify. For people who can't afford a car or computer, keeping up with the paperwork can be a time and money drain, Patton said.

Patton said the waiver proposal's "community engagement activities" could constitute employment under the Fair Labor Standards Act. This would require that participants get paid the federal minimum hourly wage. But unlike other programs with work requirements, Medicaid has no mechanism to ensure people are compensated. It could also violate the 13th Amendment of the Constitution, which prohibits involuntary servitude, she said.

Ohio will submit the proposal after the public comment period ends on March 18.

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The FORM Group

From: Westlake, Libby
Sent: Friday, March 2, 2018 8:50 AM
To: Westlake, Libby
Subject: E-Clips for 3/2/2018

HOUSE E-CLIPS

3/2/2018



BILL WOULD REQUIRE DRIVERS TO MOVE OVER FOR GARBAGE TRUCKS

The Ohio House will consider legislation giving garbage trucks "move-over" protections in place for emergency vehicles.

NEXT PHASE OPENS IN OHIO'S \$8M OPIOID TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGE

Ohio launched the second stage of its global technology challenge Wednesday aimed at finding solutions to the U.S. opioid crisis.

MORE THAN 131,000 ISSUED CONCEALED CARRY LICENSES IN OHIO

Ohio's attorney general says more than 131,000 residents were issued licenses last year to carry concealed weapons.

OHIO BILL WOULD ALLOW PROTECTIVE ORDERS FOR DATING VIOLENCE

A bipartisan bill allowing victims of dating violence to seek protective orders against alleged perpetrators is on its way to Ohio Republican Gov. John Kasich.

KASICH PROPOSES 'RED FLAG' LAW, OTHER GUN CHANGES IN STATE

Gov. John Kasich on Thursday advocated a "red flag" law for Ohio, a ban on armor-piercing ammunition and other gun policy positions he says represent political consensus in a bellwether state that could fly nationally.

2 DEMOCRATS FOR OHIO OFFICES WANT OPEN REDISTRICTING PROCESS

Two Democrats seeking statewide office in Ohio are pitching a plan they say would guarantee Ohio's redistricting process for congressional districts is more transparent to the public.



FOR SCHIAVONI RUNNING MATE, DRUG CRISIS IS ALL IN THE FAMILY

Ohio's opioid epidemic is so extensive that it's struck the families of at least two of those seeking statewide office.

KASICH UNVEILS 'UNANIMOUS' PROPOSALS TO CURB GUN VIOLENCE

Saying he has to deal with the art of what's possible — what can pass the Republican-dominated General Assembly, Gov. John Kasich proposed six gun-law reforms on Thursday that he believes he can help Ohio avert some gun deaths.

CRITICS SLAM MEDICAID WORK PROPOSAL

Advocates, health-care providers and others slammed a state plan on Thursday that would require most non-disabled adults on Medicaid to work or lose their tax-funded health care.

LAWMAKERS OFFER COUNTIES \$114.5 MILLION FOR VOTING MACHINES

Counties would get nearly \$115 million in state money to replace aging voting machines in time for the 2019 election under a bill expected to pass the legislature this spring.

REP. BOGGS NEEDS HELP TO QUALIFY FOR PRIMARY BALLOT

State Rep. Kristin Boggs, D-Columbus, will need help from Republican Secretary of State Jon Husted in order to qualify to run as a write-in candidate for the May primary.

MAYOR GINTHER ENDORSES CORDRAY FOR GOVERNOR

Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther on Thursday endorsed Richard Cordray, former Ohio attorney general and former director of the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, in the Democratic primary for governor.

EDITORIAL: WORKPLACE DRUG USE DEMANDS ATTENTION

Drugs and workplaces don't mix. That's common sense, but now employers have more reasons to take a hard line against employee drug use.

Dayton Daily News
www.daytondailynews.com

MORE THAN 131,000 OHIOANS GET PERMITS TO CARRY CONCEALED GUNS

More than 131,000 Ohioans got their licenses last year to carry concealed weapons — 77,281 new ones and 54,064 renewals, according to Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine.

THE PLAIN DEALER

\$114.5 MILLION PROPOSED FOR NEW OHIO VOTING MACHINES

Ohio counties could soon get some money from the state to help replace aging voting equipment.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD TO FOCUS ON OHIO RACES FOR U.S. SENATE AND GOVERNOR

Planned Parenthood political organizations announced Thursday that they'll spend at least \$20 million in this year's elections, with a particular focus on gubernatorial and Senate races in Ohio and seven other states.

OHIO GOV. JOHN KASICH PROPOSES 6 GUN POLICY CHANGES

Tightening background checks for gun buyers and allowing "red flag" protection orders were among six gun violence policy recommendations made Thursday by a bipartisan panel assembled by Gov. John Kasich.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HASN'T DECIDED WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN OPIOID LITIGATION

As U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions promised, the Justice Department on Thursday evening filed a "statement of interest" in the swath of lawsuits being heard in Cleveland that accuse drug manufacturers and distributors of heavily contributing to the nation's opioid epidemic.

THE ENQUIRER

JOHN KASICH'S 'COMMONSENSE' GUN CONTROL PLAN: WOULD NEW OHIO GUN LAWS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

John Kasich wants to change Ohio's gun laws, touting support for "commonsense" measures from a handful of Republicans and Democrats.

THE BLADE

One of America's Great Newspapers

KASICH PROPOSES GUN REFORM MEASURES

Gov. John Kasich on Thursday unveiled a package of proposed gun law reforms to prohibit the sale of armor-piercing ammunition and third-party "strawman" sales of guns to people prohibited from having them.

PROPOSAL WOULD FUND NEW VOTING MACHINES

Ohio would borrow \$114.5 million to help counties replace an aging fleet of voting machines in time by next year under a bill reworked Thursday.

EDITORIAL: RIGHT-TO-WORK INFRINGES ON EMPLOYERS

Is it too much to ask for some consistency from time to time?

EDITORIAL: DENNIS KUCINICH LEADING ON GUN ISSUE

Successful political campaigns sometimes catch a breeze they never counted on because of some unexpected occurrence that changes public attitudes between the time the candidates filed and the time the voters vote.

The Vindicator


SCHIAVONI GETS THE MAHONING DEMOCRATIC ENDORSEMENT FOR GOVERNOR

When it came to endorsing a candidate for governor, the Mahoning County Democratic Party overwhelmingly went for one of its own.

From: Ohio Chamber
Sent: Monday, March 5, 2018 11:09 AM
To: Rep76
Subject: Ohio Chamber Legislative Update March 5

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**OHIO CHAMBER
of COMMERCE**

Legislative Update


March 5, 2018

Read about the issues that impact your business.

We're All For

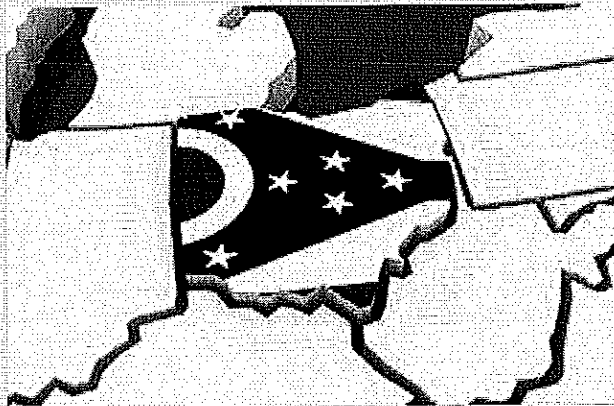
Health Insurance Mandate Relief
Ohio Chamber Makes the Case for Health Insurance Mandate Relief - About a month ago, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce Research Foundation released the findings of its quarterly business leader's survey. For the fourth consecutive quarter, the cost of health care was the top issue of concern to Ohio business leaders. This didn't come as much of a surprise, as health care costs are a top concern in just about any survey of business leaders. [Continue reading.](#)

[Click here](#) to read about the bills we are following.



We're All for Providing Information

Be sure to read our latest blog posts on allforohio.com for additional information that is of interest to Ohio Chamber members. Here are our blog posts from the past week:



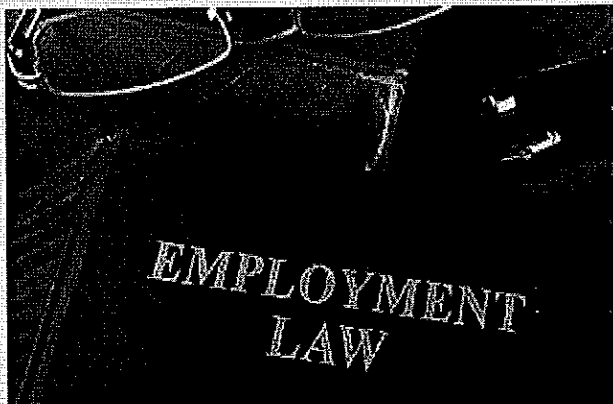
Ohio General Assembly Primary Election Preview: Incumbent Primaries

- Currently in the Ohio House, there are 46 Republican and 22 Democrat incumbents seeking re-election, making for a total of 68. In the Ohio Senate, there are four Republican and three Democrat incumbents seeking re-election, a total of seven. [Read more.](#)



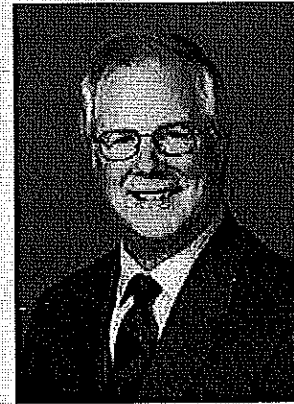
Legislation Curbing Disability Accessibility Lawsuit Abuse Passes Ohio House

- Disability accessibility laws, both state and federal, were enacted to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, provide access to public accommodations and to provide individuals with remedies for violations of the law. [Continue reading.](#)



NLRB Reverts Back to Unworkable

Joint Employer Test - Earlier this week, in what employers hope is just a temporary – but stinging – setback, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) vacated its December ruling that freed employers from having to deal with an unworkable and expansive legal test for determining whether an entity is considered a "joint employer." [Continue reading.](#)



Chamber Catch Up - In honor of our 125th Anniversary this year, we are following up with some of our former Ohio Chamber employees in a new series we are calling Chamber Catch Up. The first former employee is Dan Navin. [Read more about Dan.](#)

We're All for Connections

Our issue-specific business advocates can help you navigate legislative and regulatory issues that impact your business. Our membership specialists can guide you through the services we offer. Our communications team can make sure you are getting the information you need. Just let us know how we can help. Here's how you can reach us:



Contact Ohio Chamber Lobbyists

Keith Lake, Vice President Government Affairs

klake@ohiochamber.com

Don Boyd, Director Labor & Legal Affairs

dboyd@ohiochamber.com

Zack Frymier, Director Energy & Environmental Policy

zfrymier@ohiochamber.com

Jeff McClain, Director Tax & Economic Policy

jmcclain@ohiochamber.com

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From: Finlay, Serena
Sent: Monday, March 5, 2018 11:11 AM
To: Paretti, Dominic
Subject: Request for Co-Sponsorship – Paid Family and Medical Leave

REMINDER-DEADLINE TO CO SPONSOR IS THIS FRIDAY AT 4PM



MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative Janine Boyd and Representative Kristin Boggs
DATE: February 5, 2018
RE: Request for Co-Sponsorship = 6 Paid Family and Medical Leave

We will soon introduce legislation to create the Ohio Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. Today we chose to send this co-sponsor request as this date marks the 25th anniversary of FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act). This legislation will provide 12 weeks of family and medical leave benefits, which will permit individuals to care for a family member, bond with a new child, or address their own serious health condition.

Out of 178 countries worldwide, the United States is one of three that does not provide paid leave to new mothers. So far five states—California, New Jersey, New York, Hawaii and Rhode Island offer some sort of paid leave to men and women who provide care. The federal Family Medical Leave Act provides 12 weeks of leave for family and medical reasons. This time is unpaid and employers with fewer than 50 employees are exempt, which eliminates a large segment of workers. Ohio should lead on the issue of paid leave to grow our economy and allow working people to put family first.

The program will be under the purview of the Department of Job and Family Services. An individual would receive leave insurance benefits for: a health condition which makes him/her unable to perform their job duties; caring for a new child during after birth, adoption,

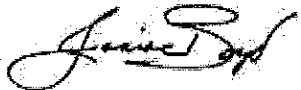
or foster care placement; caring for a child, parent, or spouse who has a serious health condition; or the individual is taking any other leave as authorized by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. In order to be eligible for program benefits, an individual must file a claim with ODJFS; must have worked at least 680 hours during the base period; premiums have been withheld and remitted for at least one year; and the leave must be for the above-mentioned purposes.

Once established, program benefits will be paid by assessing premiums on employees. Employers will be required to deduct and withhold premiums from employee's wages. However, an employer may opt to pay the contributions on behalf of employees.

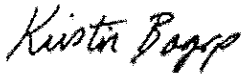
An employee who is covered by an employer policy or collective bargaining agreement that provides the employee with greater leave than that provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act may elect not to participate in the Program in accordance with rules adopted by the Director. An employee who elects to opt out of participating in the Program is not liable for any premium or contribution that would otherwise be due under the Program.

Working people in Ohio should not have to worry about losing their job or falling behind financially just to take care of a sick child or relative; address their own serious health condition; or care for and bond with their newborn child. Ohio cities like Dayton and Cincinnati are leading on leave. By allowing working people to put their family first, we can truly make Ohio a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

If you have any questions or would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Dominic Paretti, at 614-644-5079 or via email at Dominic.Paretti@OhioHouse.Gov and Serena Finlay, 614-466-1896 or via email at Serena.Finlay@OhioHouse.Gov. **The deadline to co-sponsor is Friday, March 9 at 4:00pm.**



Janine Boyd
State Representative, Ohio House District 09



Kristin Boggs
State Representative, Ohio House District 18

From: Gongwer News Service
Sent: Monday, March 5, 2018 6:34 PM
To: DL Gongwer
Subject: Ohio Report, Monday, March 5, 2018
Attachments: 180305dayplan.htm; Mar5.htm

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OHIO REPORT MONDAY, MARCH 5

Children Services Rule To Get Second Look After Concerns Raised At JCARR

Report Outlines Ohio's Rankings Ahead Of Kasich's Address

Lawmaker Looks To Crack Down On Theft In Office

Opioid Prescriptions Fall For Fifth Straight Year, Pharmacy Board Reports

DeWine Sues Monsanto, Crew SC Operator/Investor And MLS

**Planned Updates To Give Farmers New Tool In Curbing Phosphorus
Runoff**

**House District 83: Former Nurse, Business Leader Face Off In GOP
Primary**

Rover, OEPA Clash Over Landslides, Detected Chemical Traces

New Member Profile: Rep. McClain Follows In Father's Footsteps

**Politics Notebook: Buckeye Institute Highlights Capital Budget 'Pork';
Taylor Picks Up Endorsement; Schiavoni Releases New Ad; Balderson
Touts War Chest**

Supplemental Agency Calendar

Supplemental Event Planner

= A

CALENDARS

Day Planner

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Daily Activity Planner for Tuesday, March 6

Legislative Committees

Senate Public Utilities (Committee Record) (Chr. Beagle, B., 466-6247), Finance Hearing Rm., 9:30 a.m.

- Confirmation hearing on governor's appointments of M. Beth Trombold, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and Gregory Murphy, Power Siting Board

HB 478 **WIRELESS SERVICES** (Smith, R., LaTourette, S.) To modify the law regarding wireless service and the placement of small cell wireless facilities in the public way. (1st Hearing-Sponsor)

House Finance (Committee Record) (Chr. Smith, R., 466-1366), Rm. 313, 10 a.m.

HB 529 **CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS** (Ryan, S.) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020. (3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

HB 508 **OHIO CORPS** (Ryan, S., Reineke, B.) To establish the OhioCorps Pilot Project and to make an appropriation. (4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote)

HB 378 **BROADBAND GRANTS** (Smith, R., Cera, J.) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation. (7th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments, substitute & vote)

House Ways & Means (Committee Record) (Chr. Schaffer, T., 466-8100), Rm. 121, 10 a.m.

SB 226 **TAX HOLIDAY** (Bacon, K.) To provide for a permanent three-day sales tax "holiday" each August during which sales of clothing and school supplies are exempt from sales and use tax. (2nd Hearing-Proponent)

House Agriculture & Rural Development (Committee Record) (Chr. Hill, B., 644-6014), Rm. 121, 1 p.m.

HB 501 **VETERINARY TITLES** (LaTourette, S., Huffman, S.) To change professional title of "registered veterinary technician" to "registered veterinary nurse." (1st Hearing-Sponsor)

HR 298 **ALFALFA PRODUCTS** (Sprague, R., Hill, B.) To recognize the existence of two alfalfa products in light of the recent action of the Ingredient Definition Committee of the Association of American Feed Control Officials. (1st Hearing-Sponsor)

Senate Finance (Committee Record) (Chr. Oelslager, S., 466-0626), Finance Hearing Rm., 2:30 p.m.

SB 266 **CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS** (Oelslager, S.) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make

reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020. (3rd Hearing-Opponent)

SB 225

BROADBAND GRANTS (Schiavoni, J., Eklund, J.) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation. (1st Hearing-Sponsor)

SB 246

STUDENT REMOVAL (Lehner, P., Manning, G.) To enact the "SAFE Act" to revise the procedures for emergency removal of a student, to prohibit certain suspensions and expulsions of students in grades pre-kindergarten through three, to require each public school to implement a positive behavior intervention and supports framework in accordance with state standards, and to make an appropriation. (1st Hearing-Sponsor)

HB 329

PYRAMID SCHEMES (Pelanda, D.) To modify the law governing pyramid promotional schemes. (3rd Hearing-Opponent)

House Session (Committee Record), Senate Session (Committee Record) (Chr. Rosenberger, C., 466-3357, Chr. Obhof, L., 466-4900), Fritsche Theater, Otterbein University, 30 S. Grove St., Westerville, 7 p.m.

- **Joint convention for the Governor's State of the State address**

Agency Calendar

Small Business Advisory Council, Women's Small Business Accelerator's ThinkSpace, 24 Westerview Dr., Westerville, 10 a.m.

Public Facilities Commission, 35th Fl., 30 E. Broad St., Columbus, 3:30 p.m.

Event Planner

OhioLINK, Ohio Department of Higher Education discussion on textbook affordability and open educational resources, Otterbein University, Towers Hall, Westerville, 10 a.m.

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) fundraiser, Due Amici, 67 E. Gay Street, Columbus, 11:30 a.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Citizens for McColley)

Rep. Scott Ryan (R-Granville Township) fundraiser, Oliver's, 26 N. High St., Columbus, 11:30 a.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000; Host: \$500; Chair \$350 to Citizens for Scott Ryan)

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Volume #87, Report #43 -- Monday, March 5, 2018

Children Services Rule To Get Second Look After Concerns Raised At JCARR

The Department of Job and Family Services will refile a proposed rule dealing with child abuse and neglect investigations after agencies said it would lead to more cases and higher costs.

The Public Children Services Association of Ohio told members of the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review Monday that the proposed rules would prevent agencies from making "collateral contacts" before deciding to accept a case. That means they would not be able to check certain details, such as whether a parent was in drug treatment, before opening an investigation.

ODJFS argued the county agencies have long been advised in state guidance not to do so. Contacting other people about a potential child abuse or neglect case before contacting the parent can jeopardize the parent's privacy.

The proposed rule changes were designed in part to incorporate revisions to the federal Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which require more mandatory reporting in cases where children are born addicted to drugs.

The department included the provision preventing collateral contacts before cases to reinforce provisions that have been in guidance for more than a decade, Carla Carpenter, deputy director for the Office of Families and Children at ODJFS, told JCARR.

"The change to the rule merely echoes the guidance that we have been providing since 2005," she said.

Mary Wachtel, director of public policy for the PCSAO, said the rules would make it harder for agencies to screen potential cases by preventing them from following up for more information on referrals before opening an official investigation. It could lead to agencies opening investigations for children who aren't being neglected or abused, opening cases that would require home visits and other costs, she said.

"We are talking about a judicious, somewhat limited use of pre-screening collateral contacts," she said.

Other states allow for collateral contacts before cases are screened in, she said. Those states often have limits, such as that the only people to be contacted would be mandatory reporters of abuse or neglect, such as medical providers.

Ms. Wachtel suggested the department convene a stakeholder group to work out a solution.

"There is a fix here," she said. "We respectfully request that the rules be withdrawn to give time for a substantive discussion and consideration."

The department consulted with stakeholders before drafting the rule, Ms. Carpenter said.

Agencies are given 24 hours to gather information from internal sources, such as if the parent has had previous contact with the child welfare system, and to work back with the person referring the case, she said.

In many cases, particularly those involving drug abuse under the CARA provisions, the person making the referral is a medical professional, Ms. Carpenter said. In those cases, the provider can obtain a release of medical records from the parent to demonstrate that the parent has a drug treatment care plan, for example.

Lawmakers pressed the department on what would happen if the person making the referral was not a medical provider.

"How can you get a written release when you're not allowed to make a collateral contact?" Sen. Michael Skindell (D-Lakewood) asked.

The agencies would be able to look at the information they have and to ask follow-up to the person referring the case, Ms. Carpenter said. The rules follow the same procedure as guidance in place now.

"They essentially would be making that decision the same way they do today," she said.

JCARR Chair Sen. Joe Uecker (R-Loveland) asked how many counties are not complying with the guidelines.

Ms. Carpenter said the department wasn't aware of deviation from the guidance until recently.

Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) said the agency indicated the rule change would have no fiscal effect for the state or for counties, but it could increase the number of cases agencies take on.

The department said the change only codified what was expected to be standard practice, and increases weren't anticipated, Ms. Carpenter said.

"We have a duty as children services agencies to respond to reports that require our attention," she said. "We don't have control over what comes through our front door."

JCARR members caucused for about 45 minutes on the issue, after which ODJFS officials said they would refile the rule pending further discussions with stakeholders.

Report Outlines Ohio's Rankings Ahead Of Kasich's Address

While the state comes in above national averages for the number of residents with health insurance, students enrolled in Pre-K, and structurally sound bridges, it is lagging behind in a number of other areas, a new report shows.

One Ohio Now, a coalition of more than 100 health and human service organizations, labor unions and advocacy groups, released its third annual State of Ohio report on Monday. It shows Ohio's rankings in 16 areas encompassing health, education, the economy and equality.

State Director Gavin DeVore Leonard said it's important that Ohioans have a full picture of how the state is doing before the governor delivers his annual State of the State address on Tuesday.

"Unfortunately, what typically happens with the State of the State is sort of cherry picking the things that make you sound the best, the things you feel like you have the most likelihood of succeeding on in the future, and then often times sort of glazing over the things that are really at the foundation of what's happening, particularly in a place like Ohio, where there is just no getting around it, we are struggling. We're having a hard time keeping up," he said during a Statehouse press event.

Gov. John Kasich and those close to him haven't divulged what his speech will entail, but he told reporters last week that it will be "odd" and "different" than in past years. Being his last SOTS address, he's expected to recap his accomplishments while in office and focus on how he's helped to change state operations during his tenure. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, March 2, 2018)

Responding to the One Ohio Now report, his spokesman, Jon Keeling, touted the impacts the governor's leadership has had on the state over the last seven years.

"Jobs are up. Wages are growing. More Ohioans have health coverage. Support for K-12 education is at record levels. Poverty is the lowest in nearly a decade. We're taking better care of the vulnerable and those who live in the shadows. And Ohioans are wearing our colors with pride in ways this state hasn't seen in a long time," he said.

"The governor has set a new standard for leadership here in Ohio, and if those values are continued the stage is set for even more progress long after he's gone."

In addition to showing where the state ranks nationally, the report also compares last year's stats to this year's. As infant mortality, overdose deaths and poverty got worse in Ohio in 2017, the state has improved in the areas of college tuition, home foreclosures and hunger.

Despite improvements in some categories, it shouldn't be overlooked that Ohio still ranks at the bottom of states, Mr. DeVore Leonard said.

Higher investments in underperforming areas, such as K-12 and programs combatting hunger could save the state billions of dollars in the long term because Ohioans would be better off, he said.

Especially in K-12, where spending on an inflationary basis has been stagnant since 2002, it's "hard to be a recipe for success," he said.

"We believe that this can be solved and that's actually what the data shows when you look at what's happening around the country," Mr. DeVore Leonard said. "We're nervous that what's happening is that the legislature and the governor are essentially ignoring what the data tells us about how to move our state. They're ignoring what the data tells us about how we should actually get fit and get strong here in Ohio."

To find the funding to make needed investments, he suggested the state repeal a controversial small business tax cut and increase income tax rates for the state's wealthiest.

Although Gov. Kasich has been a champion of eliminating personal income taxes, Mr. DeVore Leonard said a recent softening of his policy stances gives advocates hope that he could be swayed by the data in the report.

"Over the past several weeks and the last few years we've seen that the governor has shown a willingness to reconsider when the facts are just too clear to overcome," he said, citing the governor's support of Medicaid expansion and gun policy proposals.

Mr. DeVore Leonard was joined at the rollout of the report by Trina Payne, executive director of the Ross County Community Action Commission, small business owner Dan Heck, and Vincent Johns Jr. with Faith in Public Life.

Ms. Payne said she's most concerned about the rise in drug overdose deaths in Appalachia - something One Ohio Now tracked for the first time this year.

"Data shows that we must invest in our future as a state to ensure that these numbers decrease and families and communities are given resources to be successful," she said.

Lawmaker Looks To Crack Down On Theft In Office

Public officials who get caught with their hands in the cookie jar would soon face steeper penalties under recently introduced legislation.

The proposal (SB 268) sponsored by Sen. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville) would establish first- and second-degree felony offenses for theft in office.



Sen. Wilson

Under current law, theft in office of any amount is limited to a third-degree felony that carries a maximum sentence of three years in prison.

The proposal would change the law to mirror existing penalties for theft. A theft in office of between \$150,000 and \$750,000 would result in a second-degree felony charge that carries a maximum sentence of up to eight years in prison.

Sen. Wilson said the legislation came about after conversations with State Auditor Dave Yost.

"We have a different set of standards for theft when it is someone in office, and in my estimation it shouldn't be," he said in an interview.

A theft of more than \$750,000 would result in a first-degree felony charge, making the offender eligible for a maximum prison sentence of 11 years.

In addition, the measure would allow courts to include the cost of a forensic audit in a restitution order when the victim is a public entity.

Rep. Derek Merrin (R-Maumee) has introduced legislation (HB 391) to include the cost of accounting done to determine the extent of an economic loss for restitution purposes. It was recently amended to limit the amount of restitution to be granted for accounting or auditing costs to be reasonable and not exceed the value of the property stolen or damaged.

Sen. Wilson said he would be open to limiting the auditing costs that can be recouped, but wants to ensure that the public is made whole.

"I am open to that but my main concern is that the public not pay and the person who is audited and found guilty has to pay the costs," he said.

Sen. Wilson believes the measure will be well received in the legislature.

"I think it's so logical it will pass unanimously," he said.

Rep. Robert Cupp (R-Lima) is expected to introduce companion legislation in the lower chamber.

The proposal would also bar those convicted of theft in office from serving in a position of public trust.

"Theft in office is a severe crime that warrants an equally severe punishment," Auditor Yost said in a statement.

Opioid Prescriptions Fall For Fifth Straight Year, Pharmacy Board Reports

Doctors in Ohio prescribed fewer opioids in 2017, continuing an ongoing trend, according to data released Monday by the State Board of Pharmacy.

It was the fifth year in a row the number of opioid prescriptions reported to the state's Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System fell.

There were 568 million opioid doses dispensed to Ohio patients in 2017, the report found, down from 631 million in 2016 and 28.4% from an all-time high of 793 million in 2012.

There were 9.3 million total prescriptions dispensed, down from 10.1 million in 2016 and down from a high of 12.6 million in 2012.

"Ohio has one of the most comprehensive and aggressive approaches in the country to tackling the opioid epidemic," Pharmacy Board Executive Director Steven W. Schierholt said in a statement. "Through improvements to OARRS, new prescribing rules and guidelines, shuttering pill mills and aggressive regulatory action against unscrupulous prescribers, the state is making considerable progress in reducing the supply of prescription opioids and other controlled substances that can be abused or diverted."

The OARRS system saw more than 88 million patient reports requested, along with an 88% decrease in the number of people engaged on doctor shopping, the board reported.

"It is widely accepted that prescription opioid abuse often progresses to the use of heroin and other illicit drugs. That is why Ohio's efforts to reduce exposure to prescription opioids are essential to combatting this public health crisis," said Tracy Plouck, director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

The report also found a decrease in the number of prescribers and patients receiving opioid prescriptions. The patient total dropped to just below 2 million, after topping 3 million in 2012. The number of prescribers also fell to just over 55,100, from a high of nearly 66,650 in 2012.

The number of benzodiazepines dispensed to patients also fell, dropping to 233 million solid doses from 254 million in 2016 and 297 million in 2012.

The report also tracked the number of opioid doses prescribed for acute pain, a recent point of emphasis for the state, which has limited the supply doctors can prescribe.

The number of doses for acute pain fell to just under 17 million in 2017, from a high of 31.2 million in 2012. The average prescription also fell from 8.37 days to 7.1 days.

County-level data is also available from the Board of Pharmacy.

The Ohio State Medical Association said doctors have been working to reduce the number of opioid painkillers given to patients.

"Ohio physicians for this entire decade have dedicated themselves to being part of the solution to the opioid epidemic which has gripped our state and we're seeing the positive effects of that commitment," OSMA spokesman Reggie Fields said in a statement. "Through better pain management treatment efforts and clearer state rules and guidelines, physicians are better equipped to make appropriate decisions when it is necessary to prescribe an opioid."

The OSMA pointed to its Smart Rx program, designed to educate prescribers about the safe use of opioids.

"Still, more work needs to be done to reduce the number of opioids dispensed and Ohio physicians remain committed to providing high-quality medical care that is safe and in the best interest of patients," he said.

DeWine Sues Monsanto, Crew SC Operator/Investor And MLS

Attorney General Mike DeWine on Monday announced the filing of two lawsuits - one against a multinational agrochemical company and another designed to halt the possible move of the Columbus Crew.

Filed in Hamilton County Common Pleas Court, Mr. DeWine accuses Monsanto of producing and selling polychlorinated biphenyls from 1929 to 1977 despite knowing the risk the chemical compound posed to humans.

"Ohioans deserve to enjoy their natural resources without contamination from these toxic chemicals, and we believe Monsanto should be held responsible for the damage it caused," the gubernatorial candidate said in a statement. "Our goal in taking this action is to protect Ohio, its citizens, and its natural resources."

The company did not respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit by publication time.

PCBs were used in paints, inks, caulks, sealants, lubricants, electrical equipment and carbonless copy paper, according to the lawsuit.

The chemical compound builds up in living things and contaminates the food chain. In humans, PCBs are associated with cancer, skin and eye disorders, reduced birth weight and liver damage.

The contamination has also been found in fish, soil, plants and the air, the lawsuit alleged.

Despite learning of the toxicity of the chemical in the 1930, the company continued to use the product, according to the lawsuit, which alleges Monsanto was negligent and created a public nuisance through its manufacture, distribution and sale of PCBs.

The lawsuit seeks compensation and damages to investigate and remove PCBs from the state's natural resources.

Crew Lawsuit: Mr. DeWine also filed a lawsuit against Precourt Sports Ventures and Major League Soccer to stave off the soccer club's move to Austin.

The lawsuit is based on the "the Art Modell law," which states that an Ohio professional sports team that uses a "tax-supported facility" and receives financial assistance from the state or a political subdivision cannot relocate without an agreement with the political subdivision. It also must give the political subdivision or any group of individuals who reside in the area an opportunity to buy the team.

Among the allegations in the lawsuit is that the franchise accepted \$5 million in state funds for improvements to parking facilities, the land on which its home stadium sits is exempt from property taxes and the land is leased at below-market rate.

"Loyal Crew fans in Columbus have invested their time and loyalty in this team, and they have allowed the Crew SC to capitalize from financial incentives paid for by their tax dollars. I am left with no other choice than to file this suit to ensure our laws are followed," Mr. DeWine said.

The franchise did not return a call seeking comment by publication time.

AG DeWine was joined in the lawsuit by the city of Columbus.

"Just as importantly, the team plays in a taxpayer-supported facility, and Precourt Sports Ventures and Major League Soccer have accepted financial assistance from the state of Ohio and the City of Columbus. State law provides us with this protection," Mayor Andrew Ginther said.

The lawsuit, filed in Franklin County Common Pleas Court, was the brainchild of Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington). (See Gongwer Ohio Report, December 6, 2017)

"I am very pleased that our state's top law enforcement officer is vigorously enforcing longstanding Ohio law," he said in a statement. "The Crew SC is our team. Our town. Neither the MLS or Precourt Sports Ventures can operate above Ohio law."

Planned Updates To Give Farmers New Tool In Curbing Phosphorus Runoff

Upcoming improvements to a key tool could provide farmers with more real-time, actionable data on phosphorus runoff coming from their farms.

Called the Ohio Phosphorus Risk Index, the resource is facilitated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is soon slated for a host of upgrades that farmers and environmental groups in Ohio say will provide one more asset toward curbing phosphorous runoff.

"The idea is you'll put in real actual data and so you will get really specific information then on how to make use of that data," Ohio Farm Bureau spokesman Joe Cornely said in an interview. "And that's crucial because every farm is different - the soil type, the management practices, the type of nutrients."

The tool is aimed at assisting farmers in gauging their risk for phosphorus runoff. That runoff can degrade surface water quality and contributed to harmful algal blooms.

"Providing farmers with tools to be more efficient and environmentally conscious will help their businesses and their watershed," said Peter Bucher, water resources director for the Ohio Environmental Council. "Further identifying what works best at reducing nutrient runoff will allow more farmers to implement the appropriate practices for their property."

The new index is years in the making and is thanks to a project led by Elizabeth Dayton, a researcher in Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The project was funded through a \$1 million USDA Conservation Innovation Grant and \$1 million in matching donations from Ohio farmer groups.

"The index provides a long-term, average estimate of field-scale phosphorus loss based on farmer specific inputs," Ms. Dayton said. "It gives farmers the ability to compare crop management scenarios and evaluate changes in phosphorus runoff, allowing them to prioritize time and resources when making management decisions."

The tool also helps put Ohio's goal to reduce phosphorus levels in Lake Erie by 40% by 2025 within reach, Ms. Dayton said. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 13, 2017)

"The index quantifies how voluntary changes in agricultural practices contribute to achieving target phosphorus runoff reduction goals," she added. "If you multiply that by the millions of crop acres in Ohio, the 40% reduction target appears achievable."

Mr. Cornely said solving the issue of phosphorus levels will "take a whole toolbox."

"And this is one more tool to go in that box," he said. "So when you look at this as it's employed in conjunction with other tools - some that exist, some still being in development - this is one good piece of that arsenal we need to fix the problem."

After harmful algal bloom activity in 2017 tied the third worst season on record, the United States Environmental Protection Agency is moving to reconsider whether Lake Erie's western basin should be classified as impaired. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, January 22, 2018)

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency has touted record spending on water quality projects in 2017, although advocates said more resources are needed. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, December 27, 2017)

House District 83: Former Nurse, Business Leader Face Off In GOP Primary

Republican contenders for the 83rd House District seat each say they can bring a unique perspective to the General Assembly thanks to their respective expertise in the medical and business fields.

Cheryl Buckland, a member of the Ohio Republican Party's State Central and Executive Committee, and Jon Cross, CEO of the Hardin County Chamber and Business Alliance, are vying to succeed Rep. Robert Sprague (R-Findlay), who is running for state treasurer.

Ms. Buckland, 63, was appointed to the ORP's leadership committee in 2013 and has been elected twice since then. A self-described "non-traditional candidate," she's spent four decades working at skilled nursing facilities, teaching nursing students and operating her own extended care facility.

"We have not had a nurse in the General Assembly since 2010," Ms. Buckland said. "With all due respect, we have a lot of people making healthcare decisions without a healthcare background.... I feel I can be a voice for every healthcare discipline."

Mr. Cross, 38, has a background in commercial real estate. He's held the top job at the Hardin County chamber since 2014 and before that spent several stints dabbling in politics in Kansas, California and Texas. In addition to some northeast Ohio campaigns, he also spent a two-year span as an advance man for then-California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

It's his current role, however, that he says gives him an up close look at Ohio's competitiveness with other states and places him on the front lines of drawing and keeping businesses in the Buckeye State.

"Every day as an economic development director, I'm responsible for helping to attract new businesses to our community and our region and helping existing companies with their current demands," Mr. Cross said. "So I think I bring a unique perspective to understanding what it takes to attract a business to Ohio or keep a business open and successful in Ohio."

When it comes to the forthcoming race for House speaker shaping up between Rep. Ryan Smith (R-Bidwell) and Rep. Larry Householder (R-Glenford), both candidates declined to publicly weigh in at this point.

"Right now that's my focus: the primary," Ms. Buckland said. "I know both the gentlemen and I'm happy to make a declaration of support when that's necessary."

And although he said he's met with both speaker candidates, Mr. Cross echoed that sentiment. "My philosophy has been I have to win my race first," he said.

But there are plenty of other areas in which the candidates remain at odds. Mr. Cross in particular has questioned whether his opponent shares true conservative principles.

"I'm a proud Republican who supports our president," Mr. Cross said. "I'm a strong pro-life advocate. I will do anything I can to help save and protect human life. I don't believe my opponent is."

Ms. Buckland denied any claim that she doesn't support life. Still, she said her medical background has given her the ability to emotionally detach from the issue.

"As a health professional I've been trained to put my personal feelings aside and look at what is in the best interest of the patient," Ms. Buckland said. "When we look at issues that create such an emotional response in people what I can do is come to the table and get pragmatic answers. I support life, I respect death but I'm also very pragmatic and an objective thinker."

Although she supports life in healthcare and abortion-related matters, she also questioned whether politicians have inserted themselves too far into the patient-doctor relationship.

She lists her priorities if elected as advocating for farmers, steering health policy and supporting efforts to curb the opioid epidemic - an issue she saw firsthand through the addiction of her grandson. She described herself as an "out-of-the-box thinker" who can bring a new perspective to the drug fight.

"I know what I know and what I know I know very well but I'm not an expert in everything," Ms. Buckland said. "I would like to be a voice when we look at our

entitlement programs - not unlike the drug crisis - and say are we spending the right dollars in the right places?"

She and her husband sold their extended care facility in 2008, but she said the experience running a business will give her valuable insight to carry into the Statehouse. She said her world travel would also be an asset - including stays in Africa, El Salvador, Russia as well as time spent delivering Polio vaccines in Portugal.

Mr. Cross said his desire to tackle issues from the business perspective easily ties into other pressing challenges facing the state, including workforce development, educational attainment, opioid addiction and adequately funding local communities.

"My largest overarching campaign platform is to make Ohio and the 83rd District safer, stronger and open for business," he said. "How do we get better and how do we compete and how do we make sure policies are not driving people, business, education out of the state?"

His experience across the country, he said, showed him a new perspective on where Ohio stands in business friendliness compared to other states. He wants to be a voice for businesses large and small and is a strong defender of the 2nd Amendment, he said.

"We want to make sure rural America, rural Ohio, where you have large corporations to family farms, that perspective is brought into the conversation and policy decisions," Mr. Cross said.

Ms. Buckland and her husband, Larry, have seven stepchildren, 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Among her talents, she lists flamenco and tap dancing.

Mr. Cross, when he's not eating pizza and burgers on the campaign trail, enjoys spending time with his wife, Christina, and playing sports with his two sons, ages 3 and 7.

The winner of the Republican nomination will likely face Democrat Ashley Philipp of McComb who is running unopposed in the primary.

Subscribers Note: This story is part of a series focusing on key primary races for Ohio legislative seats. See Gongwer's Election Page for more information on 2018 contests, including our Key Races.

Rover, OEPA Clash Over Landslides, Detected Chemical Traces

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and Rover Pipeline builders continue to lock horns - this time engaging in a contentious back-and-forth over several land slips posing "serious threat to environmental resources."

The OEPA is also requesting new tests after the presence of a manufactured chemical, tetrachloroethene, was found in some drilling returns in Stark County.

The two issues are the latest battle grounds in the ongoing dispute between the two entities - which is simultaneously playing out in an ongoing court case in Stark County. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, February 5, 2018)

The landslip issue came to the forefront last month when Rover Pipeline LLC requested the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approve temporary workspace for it to repair 28 landslips in Ohio and West Virginia.

But the OEPA, in a subsequent missive to FERC said the company's online filing was the first notice the agency received of the situation and blasted the company for failing to adequately notify the state.

"Ohio EPA is concerned that Rover and FERC did not immediately bring to our attention what Rover now describes as 'a serious threat to sensitive environmental resources,'" OEPA wrote. "Instead of trying to work around Ohio, we again call on Rover to be forthright and provide us with information so we can ensure the environment and citizens are protected."

Rover, meanwhile, argues the state is attempting to besmirch the company in order to gain more leverage in Ohio's ongoing lawsuit. And it accuses state regulators of not fully reading the company's filings in its "haste to cast aspersions."

"Ohio EPA's letter is the latest in a string of baseless claims regarding Rover that attempt to denigrate Rover to advance its own litigation position," Rover's response reads. "Notwithstanding that Ohio EPA does not have jurisdiction in this matter, Rover, on a voluntary basis, has cooperated with Ohio EPA regarding all of its inquiries irrespective of jurisdiction, including on potential impacts from Rover's construction activities."

The OEPA has accused the company of claiming the state has no role in protecting its own environment - an idea the agency called "absurd."

The agency wrote that it "absolutely" expects "to be informed of these troubling threats" and involved in "permitting of any potential impacts to streams and wetlands."

"Moreover, where impacts have occurred, Rover needs to clearly gain our approval of actions to minimize impacts and repair the damage they have done," OEPA added.

The ongoing tiff over those land slips is just one of the conflicts the parties are engaged in. Another dispute arising in recent week centers on the presence of tetrachloroethene or PCE in some drilling fluid returns along the Tuscarawas River.

PCE is a liquid chemical that in high levels is thought to cause headaches, dizziness, unconsciousness and other effects and it is considered by the government as a potential carcinogen, according to the Ohio Department of Health.

The chemical levels detected in Rover returns registered below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's regional screening risk level for direct contact, according to the OEPA, but levels clocked in above the screening threshold of soil leaching to groundwater.

As a result, OEPA asked federal regulators to force Rover to conduct additional sampling along with a separate sampling of drilling fluid source water in an effort to pinpoint the PCE's point of origin.

"These additional samples should be taken immediately and the results submitted to our attention for further evaluation," OEPA wrote.

Rover, in turn, argues that PCE is a "prominent contaminant in the environment" and that Ohio has reported multiple instances of detections in the environment in circumstances not affiliated with the project. The company characterized the levels were "minor and non-hazardous."

"Ohio EPA has documented impacts of PCE contamination in the waters of the state and engaged in several initiatives to achieve attainment," Rover said. "Accordingly, Ohio EPA's new-found concerns are as spurious as they are disingenuous."

New Member Profile: Rep. McClain Follows In Father's Footsteps

Rep. McClain has worked in business and currently serves as director of finance and customer service for Doc Investments LLC, an online precious metals retailer. The metals retailer was designed to emphasize a low-cost retail model.

"I'm pretty experienced with the changing of what the business market looks like with online retail and some of the opportunities that go along with that," he said.

As state representative, he hopes to focus on policies that will help build small businesses.

Rep. McClain said another important focus for him is on policies that help families. Rep. McClain and his wife have been married for more than 10 years and have three children, ages 2, 4 and 8.

"I'm about Ohio families," he said. "I value the family structure greatly and what that does in setting kids up, and Ohio up, our communities up for greatness."

Promoting families can help communities deal with issues and help each other, he said.

"I want to be an advocate for families taking care of each other, being good stewards of our children and being able to foster environments where people have the resources they need to find the help that they need in their own communities and foster a culture of people helping people," he said.

Rep. McClain said he spends a lot of his time outside of work with his children and family as well as remodeling his house.

He holds a bachelor's degree from Bluffton University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Findlay.

At Bluffton, Rep. McClain was on the baseball team, playing several positions including shortstop, outfield and pitcher. One summer he traveled Europe with Athletes in Action, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ. The team played clubs in France, Germany and the Czech Republic, while also doing ministry activities with children and at camps.

"It was almost a barnstorming tour to spread baseball in Europe," he said.

Although he's familiar with the work of the House after seeing his father's experience, Rep. McClain said he hopes to prove himself and find ways to contribute, he said.

"The hat's on my head now and I'm moving forward to do everything I can to be responsive," he said.

Politics Notebook: Buckeye Institute Highlights Capital Budget 'Pork'; Taylor Picks Up Endorsement; Schiavoni Releases New Ad; Balderson Touts War Chest

The Buckeye Institute on Monday unveiled its Top 10 Worst Capital Budget Requests of 2018.

All told, the projects highlighted by the Buckeye Institute total more than \$18 million, according to the report.

Among the projects singled out is \$4 million for a Major League Soccer stadium in Cincinnati, \$2.5 million to expand the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and \$5 million for the COSI Connection Corridor.

"If these, and other pork projects in the budget, were funded using local or private dollars, as they should be, Ohio could have at least \$85 million more that it could spend on pressing state priorities, save, or better yet, return to taxpayers," Greg R. Lawson, research fellow at Institute, said in a statement.

Mr. Lawson also lamented the lack of funding for strengthening the state's physical and democratic infrastructure.

"Policymakers should do more to heed our call to focus the capital budget on strengthening Ohio's physical and democratic infrastructure and move away from projects of predominately local interest," he said. "Simply put, it is hard to see how it benefits someone in Youngstown for Cincinnati to get a soccer stadium or how people in Cleveland benefit from renovations to COSI."

Taylor Endorsement: Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor on Monday picked up an endorsement in her gubernatorial bid in the form of U.S. Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.).

In announcing his endorsement, Mr. Daines said he has known Ms. Taylor's running mate, Nathan Estruth, for many years.

"Lt. Governor Mary Taylor is a conservative who has and will continue to challenge the status quo establishment in Ohio. It is important to elect leaders in states across the country - and especially in the swing state of Ohio - who will fight for a bold conservative agenda alongside the people's representatives in Washington," he said in a statement.

"We need more private sector experience and principled conservatives to tame the over-reach of government at the federal and state levels, and the Mary Taylor/Nathan Estruth ticket are the only ones in either party who bring that for the people of Ohio."

Added Ms. Taylor in a statement: "Senator Daines' support today and over the next 68 days adds to our growing momentum as conservatives across Ohio and the country rally around my campaign as the true conservative in this race."

New Ad: Sen. Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) is out with a new ad in which he highlights his desire to create opportunities for future generations.

The 30-second spot, "For Them," features Sen. Schiavoni's family, including his two children.

"As a parent, everything you do is for them. The simple lessons, the big decisions, you want them to succeed," he says in the ad. "But you worry - what opportunities will be there for them?"

Balderson Warchest: The congressional campaign of Sen. Troy Balderson on Monday announced that it has raised \$300,000 in the eight weeks since the Zanesville Republican officially entered the race.

"This campaign has had non-stop momentum since day one, and I could not be more grateful to the many contributors of this effort," he said in a statement. "So many people from my Senate District and throughout Central Ohio have asked to be a part of our campaign because they know that my conservative record makes me the best candidate to help fix a broken Washington."

Supplemental Agency Calendar

Thursday, March 15

Criminal Sentencing Commission, 31st Fl., 77 S. High St., Columbus, 10 a.m.

Supplemental Event Planner

Tuesday, March 6

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) fundraiser, Due Amici, 67 E. Gay Street, Columbus, 11:30 a.m.,
(Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Citizens for McColley)

Wednesday, March 7

Ohioans to Stop Execution news conference on clemency hearing, Ladies Gallery, Statehouse,
Columbus, 10 a.m.

Monday, March 12

Sen. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville) fundraiser, Queen City Club, 331 E. Fourth Street, Cincinnati, 5
p.m., (Host: \$5,000 | Sponsor: \$2,500 | Supporter: \$1,000 | Attendee: \$500 to Steve Wilson for
Ohio)

Tuesday, March 13

Rep. Anne Gonzales (R-Westerville) fundraiser, The Keep, 50 W. Broad Street, Columbus, 4:30
p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Citizens for Anne Gonzales)

Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) & Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) fundraiser, Pins Mechanical
Co., 6558 Riverside Drive, Dublin, 5:30 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$250 to
Citizens for Stephanie Kunze and/or Citizens for Duffey)

Wednesday, March 14

Sen. Bill Coley (R-Liberty Twp.) fundraiser, Pub Mahone, 31 E. Gay Street, Columbus, 5 p.m.,
(Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Friends of Bill Coley)

Tuesday, March 20

Sen. Bob Hackett (R-London) & Sen. Lou Terhar (R-Cincinnati) fundraiser, Athletic Club of
Columbus - Gold, 136 E. Broad Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest:
\$350 to Hackett for Ohio and/or Friends of Lou Terhar)

Wednesday, March 21

Sen. President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) fundraiser, Athletic Club of Columbus - Crystal, 136 E.
Broad Street, Columbus, 7:30 a.m., (Sponsor: \$2,500 | Host: \$1,000 | Guest: \$500 to Citizens for
Obhof)

Tuesday, April 10

Sen. Gayle Manning (R-N. Ridgeville) & Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) fundraiser, Buckeye
Bourbon House, 36 E. Gay Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350
to Committee to Elect Gayle Manning and/or Citizens for Stephanie Kunze)

Wednesday, April 11

Sen. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) & Sen. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville) fundraiser, Athletic Club of
Columbus - Lounge, 136 E. Broad Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 |
Guest: \$350 to Peterson for Good Government and/or Steve Wilson for Ohio)

Tuesday, April 17

Sen. Scott Oelslager (R-N. Canton) & Sen. Frank Hoagland (R-Adena) fundraiser, Athletic Club of Columbus - 136 E. Broad Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Checks to Oelslager for Ohio Committee and/or Hoagland for Ohio)

Wednesday, April 18

Ohio University State Government Alumni Luncheon, Athletic Club, 136 E. Broad St., Columbus, 11:30 a.m., (Social: 11:30 am; Luncheon: 12 pm)

Sen. Jay Hottinger (R-Newark) & Sen. Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls) fundraiser, Pins, 141 N. 4th Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Citizens for Hottinger and/or Friends of Matt Dolan)

Tuesday, April 24

Rep. Andy Brenner (R-Powell) fundraiser, Athletic Club of Columbus - Parlor A/B, 136 E. Broad Street, Columbus, 11:30 a.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Brenner for Ohio)

Sen. Matt Huffman (R-Lima) & Sen. John Eklund (R-Chardon) fundraiser, Pins, 141 N. 4th Street, Columbus, 5 p.m., (Sponsor: \$1,000 | Host: \$500 | Guest: \$350 to Matt Huffman for Ohio and/or Friends of John Eklund)

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Click the  after a bill number to create a saved search and email alert for that bill.

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From: Westlake, Libby
Sent: Tuesday, March 6, 2018 9:00 AM
To: Westlake, Libby
Subject: E-Clips for 3/6/2018

HOUSE E-CLIPS

3/6/2018

AP Associated Press

GOP'S KASICH TO DELIVER 'ODD' AND FINAL STATE OF THE STATE

Republican John Kasich has spent much of his time since dropping a 2016 bid for president mulling big ideas — on party, politics, civility, faith and the future of the nation.

STATE, CITY SUE OVER SOCCER TEAM'S PROPOSED MOVE

The Ohio Attorney General and the city of Columbus have sued Major League Soccer and the owner of the Columbus Crew to stop a proposed move to Austin, Texas.

The Columbus Dispatch
Ohio's Greatest Online Newspaper

OHIO, COLUMBUS SUING TO KEEP CREW SC FROM MOVING TO AUSTIN

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine and the city of Columbus filed a lawsuit Monday against the owner of the Columbus Crew SC and Major League Soccer in an attempt to keep them from ditching Columbus in favor of Austin, Texas.

GROUP SAYS TARGETED SPENDING, NOT TAX CUTS, NEEDED TO BOOST OHIO'S PERFORMANCE

Ohio continues to lag the nation in key performance indicators, including health, education and employment, according to the latest analysis from a coalition of human-service organizations, labor unions and advocacy groups.

COSI, MARKET TOWER MAKE GROUP'S LIST OF 'WORST' CAPITAL BUDGET PROJECTS

A conservative public policy group on Monday detailed what it thinks are Ohio's top 10 worst capital budget requests — including COSI and the new Market Tower — saying Ohio's budget is riddled with "pork projects."

OHIO DOCTORS CONTINUE TO PRESCRIBE FEWER PAIN PILLS

While overall drug overdose deaths continue to climb, Ohio doctors for the fifth straight year prescribed fewer opioid painkillers to patients.

Dayton Daily News
www.daytondailynews.com

SPRINGBORO WHOLESALER TARGETED IN OHIO AG LAWSUIT FOR OPIOID DISTRIBUTION

A Springboro firm is among four pharmaceutical wholesalers being sued by Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine.

THE PLAIN DEALER

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE PRINTS 'MARSY'S LAW' CARDS FOR LOCAL POLICE

The Ohio Attorney General's Office is helping local police departments with notifying crime victims of their rights under the recently passed Marasy's Law.

OHIO WANTS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL SECURITY AFTER FLORIDA SHOOTINGS, BUT OFFICIALS HAVE NO PLAN YET

Ohio officials want to do more to help protect students in schools from attacks like the 2012 Chardon High School shootings or the recent shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

OHIO HOUSE BILL WOULD PROHIBIT ANTHEM, OTHER INSURERS FROM DENYING SOME ER CLAIMS

As promised, a Cincinnati Democrat introduced a bill in the General Assembly that would prohibit insurance companies from denying paying for some of their policyholders' emergency room claims.

OHIO HOUSE BILL WOULD USE SALES TAX CASH TO DEFRAY COST OF NFL DRAFT, OTHER EVENTS

With Northeast Ohio as a finalist to host the National Football League draft in the next couple years, there's new legislation in the Ohio House designed to help locals to pay the cost of hosting the draft and other major sporting events.

GOV. JOHN KASICH'S TERM IS COMING TO AN END. HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT FROM HIS FINAL STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS.

Gov. John Kasich won't have many moments left like this one.

LIFT LEGAL BARRIERS THAT KEEP OHIO JUVENILE JUDGES FROM HOUSING DANGEROUS JUVENILE SUSPECTS IN A MORE SECURE COUNTY JAIL: EDITORIAL

Ohio lawmakers need to revisit reforms enacted six years ago intended to protect juvenile defendants from harsh adult detention that have backfired by leaving judges with no flexibility to house dangerous juvenile offenders in more secure facilities.

THE ENQUIRER

JOHN KASICH WINDS DOWN AS OHIO GOVERNOR IN STATE OF THE STATE, WHILE STOKING 2020 CHANCES

John Kasich's time as Ohio's leader is winding down.

CONSERVATIVE GROUP: DON'T GIVE CINCINNATI \$4M FOR FC CINCINNATI STADIUM PROJECT

A conservative think tank says giving Cincinnati \$4 million for FC Cincinnati stadium infrastructure is a waste of state money.

From: Cech, Daniel
Sent: Tuesday, March 6, 2018 2:26 PM
To: House_All
CC: LSC; Wendy Estes; Dawn Palmer
Subject: House Calendar 3-7-2018
Attachments: house_calendar_03072018_01.pdf

**132ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
STATE OF OHIO**

HOUSE CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 7, 2018 - 1:30
PM

Consideration of Senate Amendments

Sub. H. B. No. 194 - Representatives Johnson, Craig

Cosponsors: Representatives Anielski, Arndt, Boccieri, Butler, Conditt, Dean, Dever, Ginter, Gonzales, Keller, Landis, Riedel, Ryan, Stein, Strahorn, Thompson, Wiggam, Green, Greenspan, Sheehy, DeVitis, Householder, Howse, Hughes, Lepore-Hagan, Manning, Reece, West, Antonio, Barnes, Boyd, Brenner, Brown, Clyde, Cupp, Duffey, Edwards, Fedor, Galonski, Gavarone, Hagan, Hambley, Hill, Holmes, Ingram, Kent, Kick, Lanese, Lang, LaTourette, Leland, McColley, Miller, O'Brien, Patmon, Patterson, Patton, Ramos, Reineke, Retherford, Rogers, Romanchuk, Schaffer, Slaby, Smith, K., Sprague, Sweeney, Young Senators Uecker, Terhar, Wilson, Hackett, Bacon, Balderson, Beagle, Brown, Burke, Coley, Dolan, Eklund, Gardner, Hoagland, Hottinger, Huffman, Kunze, LaRose, Lehner, Obhof, O'Brien, Oelslager, Peterson, Skindell, Sykes, Tavares, Thomas, Williams

To amend section 307.6910, to enact section 4503.29, and to repeal sections 4503.431, 4503.432, 4503.433, 4503.434, 4503.436, 4503.48, 4503.481, 4503.53, 4503.532, 4503.533, 4503.536, 4503.537, 4503.538, 4503.54, 4503.541, 4503.543, 4503.544, 4503.547, 4503.548, 4503.581, 4503.59, and 4503.731 of the Revised Code to establish a program for the issuance of special license plates related to military service and awards and to modify the law that governs the nonprofit corporation organized to operate the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus.

(Senate recommends passage, see Senate Journal, February 28, 2018, p. 1692.)

(Senate committee on Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs recommends substitute bill for passage, see Senate Journal, February 28, 2018, p. 1689.)

(House recommends passage, see House Journal, October 24, 2017, p. 1118.)
(House committee on Transportation and Public Safety recommends passage, see House Journal, May 24, 2017, p. 505.)

Bills for Third Consideration

H. B. No. 529 – Representative Ryan

To amend section 164.05 of the Revised Code to make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

(Committee on Finance recommends passage, see House Journal, March 6, 2018, p. 1594.)

H. B. No. 345 – Representative Butler

Cosponsor: Representative Kent

To enact section 3799.01 of the Revised Code to adopt the Solemn Covenant of the States to award prizes for curing diseases.

(Committee on Health recommends passage, see House Journal, February 14, 2018, p. 1531.)

Am. H. B. No. 87 – Representative Roegner

Cosponsors: Representatives Becker, Blessing, Butler, Dean, DeVitis, Dever, Duffey, Fedor, Hambley, Henne, Hill, Keller, Leland, Patterson, Patmon, Rezabek, Riedel, Schaffer, Slaby, Smith, K., Smith, R., Stein, Thompson, Vitale, Young, Faber

To enact section 3314.52 of the Revised Code regarding public moneys returned to the state as a result of a finding for recovery issued pursuant to an audit of the enrollment records of a community school.

(Committee on Government Accountability and Oversight recommends amended bill for passage, see House Journal, January 25, 2018, p. 1473.)

Sub. H. B. No. 453 – Representative Greenspan

Cosponsors: Representatives Antonio, Boyd, Huffman, Kick, Seitz, Sweeney, Hambley, Arndt, Carfagna

To enact section 339.062 of the Revised Code to require that all rights to and interests in discoveries or inventions made by, or patents issued to, employees using charter county hospital facilities or funding are the property of that charter county hospital.

(Committee on State and Local Government recommends substitute bill for passage, see House Journal, February 20, 2018, p. 1546.)

H. B. No. 366 – Representative Gavarone